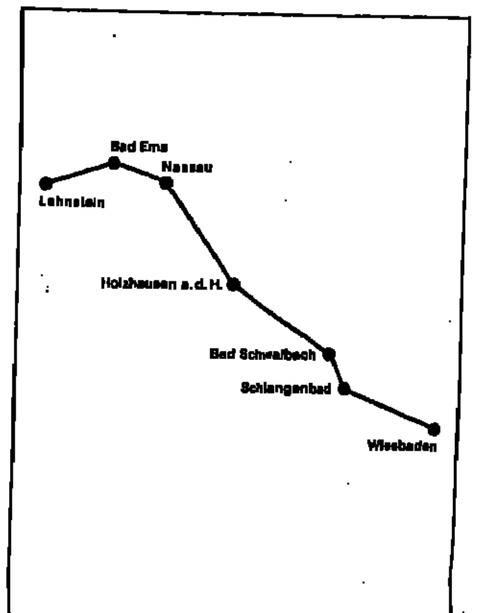
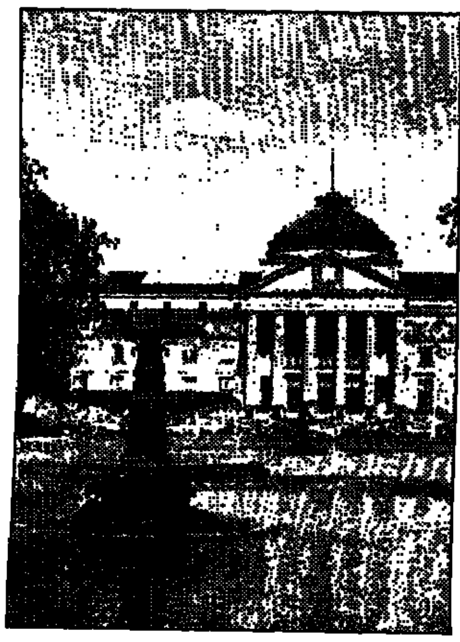


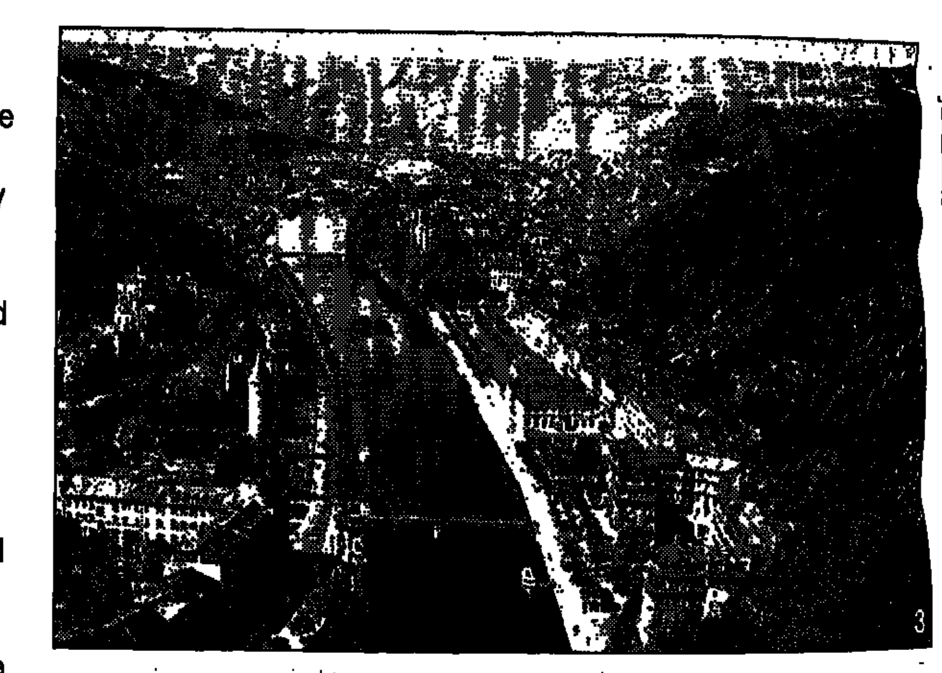
Routes to tour in Germany

The Spa Route

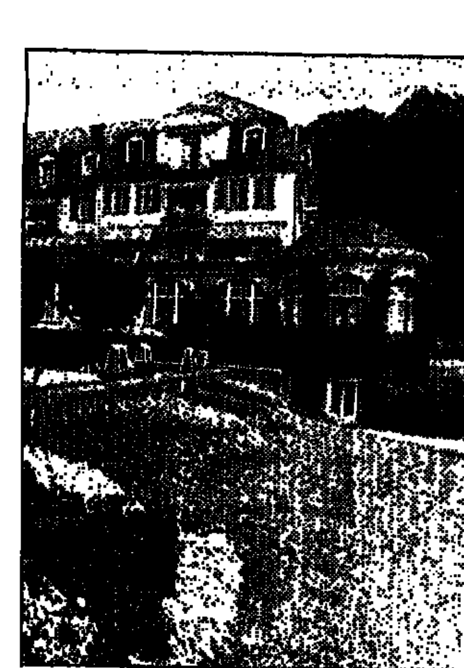


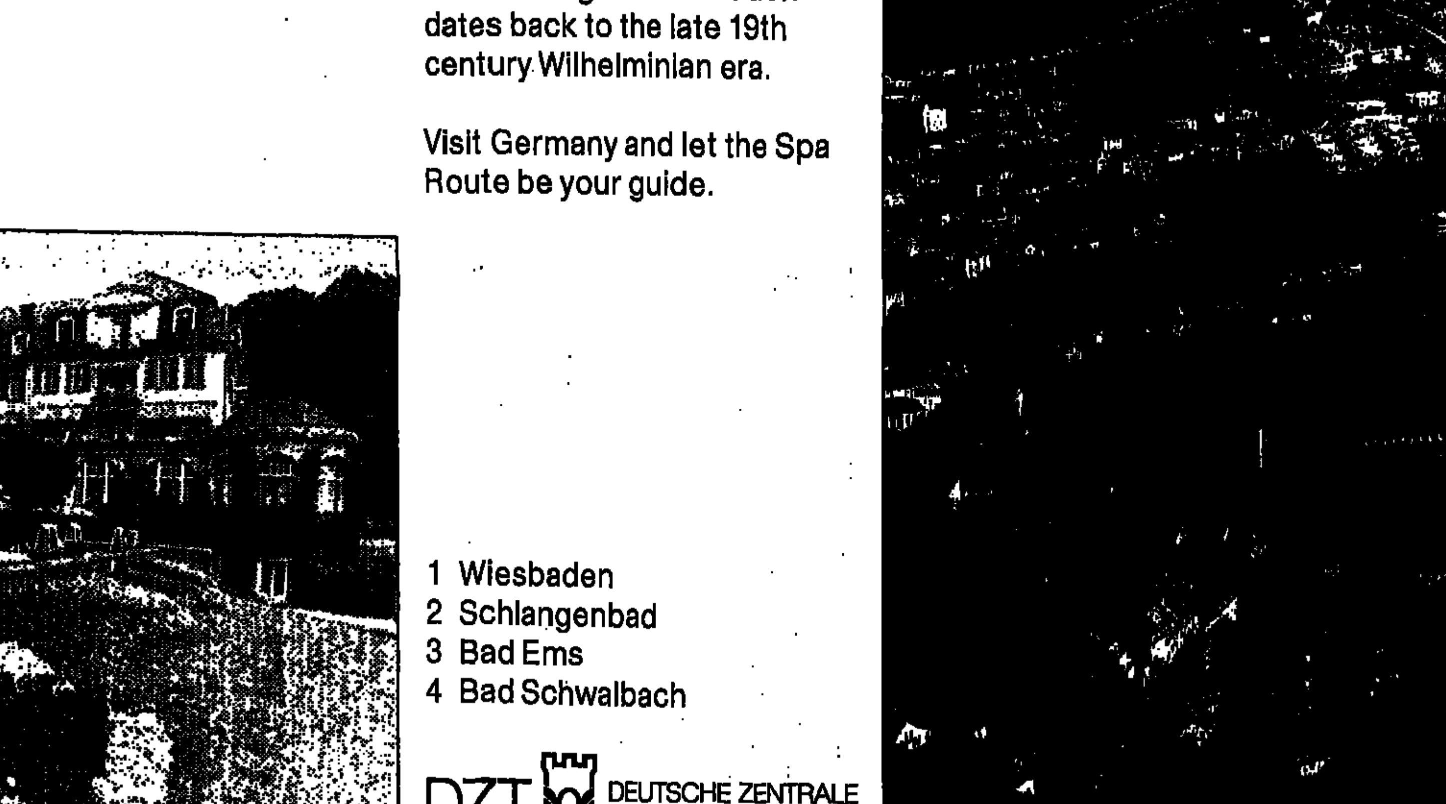
German roads will get you there, say to spas and health resorts spread not all over the country but along a route easily travelled and scenically attractive. From Lahnstein, opposite Koblenz, the Spa Route runs along the wooded chain of hills that border the Rhine valley. Health cures in these resorts are particularly successful in dealing with rheumatism and gynaecological disorders and cardiac and circulatory complaints. Even if you haven't enough time to take a full course of treatment, you ought to take a look at a few pump rooms and sanatoriums. In Bad Ems you must not miss the historic inn known as the *Wirtshaus an der Lahn*. In Bad Schwalbach see for yourself the magnificent *Kursaal*. Take a walk round the Kurpark in Wiesbaden and see the city's casino. Elegant Wiesbaden dates back to the late 19th century Wilhelminian era.

Visit Germany and let the Spa Route be your guide.









1 Wiesbaden
2 Schlangenbad
3 Bad Ems
4 Bad Schwalbach

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The German Tribune

Hamburg, 8 October 1989
Twenty-eighth year - No. 1390 - By air

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Relief as embassy squat refugees' ordeal ends

The plight of East German refugees at Bonn's embassies in Prague and Warsaw ended when, after long and tough talks on the perimeter of the UN General Assembly in New York, the German Federal government negotiated exit arrangements for them. Federal Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher flew to Prague to break the news in person. The first trainloads left by rail the same night. In less than 24 hours over 5,000 GDR refugees arrived in the Federal Republic from Prague, plus a further 800-plus from Warsaw. But the grounds of German embassies in East Bloc countries rapidly filled up again, so the problem still awaits a lasting solution. See pages 3, 4 and 15 for further coverage of the national and international ramifications.

Frankfurter Rundschau

The sense of relief was universal, uniting all shades of political opinion. The GDR government's decision to let East German refugees camped in the grounds of Bonn's embassies in Warsaw and Prague head west was a load off everyone's mind, in East *and* West.

The mass refuge sought in Bonn's diplomatic missions had not only caused human problems for everyone who was immediately concerned with the situation; it also threatened to put a dramatic damper on the entire process of reform in Eastern Europe. How well one can understand Bonn's Foreign

IN THIS ISSUE

Minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, referring to the run-up to the moment at which he was able to announce to the refugees in Prague that their Odyssey was over as "the most moving moments in my political life."

Despite the sighs of relief there must be no forgetting that the fundamental problem is still unsolved. The East German authorities have forfeited the confidence of their citizens to a far greater extent than even critical observers had previously believed.

Unless the authorities regain at least part of this confidence the exodus of refugees will inevitably be resumed in some form or other somewhere else.

Erich Honecker, whose serious illness immobilised the GDR for weeks, must surely be well aware of this fact.

Movement was not resumed until he was back in control, so it looks as though he took the decision to sanction the refugees' departure.

In the GDR this move was officially referred to as a "humanitarian act," the refugees having "been expelled via GDR territory."

That is a strange turn of phrase when you bear in mind that a state can surely not "expel" its citizens from their own country.

Herr Genscher and the Federal government were clearly well advised to keep up the dialogue with the powers that be in the GDR regardless of the tension.

They had no choice, of course, if they wanted to achieve anything. Another contributory factor seems sure to have been massive pressure exerted on the GDR by its allies.

GDR Foreign Minister Oskar Fischer, who launched furious attacks on the Federal Republic in New York, will have clearly felt this pressure at the UN General Assembly.

The signs are that his Soviet counterpart, Eduard Shevardnadze, voiced unmistakable views on the subject, reminding East Berlin how little the refugees were in keeping with reform endeavours in the East Bloc.





East German refugees give the victory sign on learning in Prague that they have been allowed to emigrate to the West. (Photo: AP)

Herr Honecker could no longer afford to ignore this pointed hint; he was due to welcome the Soviet leader, Mr Gorbachov, to East Berlin for the GDR's 40th anniversary celebrations.

It will hardly have come as a surprise to the GDR that Poland disapproves of the East Berlin government's behaviour, but Herr Honecker must have felt alarmed when even neighbouring Czechoslovakia, where the authorities are hardly enamoured of reforms, began to lose patience with the GDR.

The leaders of the GDR's Socialist Unity Party (SED) slowly seem to have realised what perestroika and glasnost have set in motion.

The politbureau seems previously to have consoled itself with the hope that they were merely window-dressing, with no intention of them being accompanied by changes in power structures.

Failing to sense the true balance of power, the East Berlin leaders evidently banked on Mr Gorbachov's orthdox opponents in Moscow; they in turn encouraged the GDR leaders to remain inflexible.

In the GDR, up to and including some of its leaders, a growing number of people are calling for reforms. They see no other way of embarking on a dialogue with their own citizens.

Even in authoritarian states a government cannot simply vote in a new people. That is true even where the people have no real choice. So Herr Honecker's decision may mark the beginning of a new policy.

The Federal government and the West as a whole are, for the most part, anxious not to create additional difficulties for the GDR government.

Herr Genscher has gained universal support for his tenet that reforms in the GDR will only be possible if framework conditions remain stable, so no-one must try to capitalise on a period of weakness.

This amounts to an offer of commonsense cooperation in a difficult process of change. But the problem is that not just East Berlin has lost control of the situation; so have all concerned.

People in the GDR are now themselves the sole judge of whether they are prepared to wait patiently again for reforms to the system with which they have had to live for so long.

Nothing less than far-reaching reforms will change the deep-seated sense of resignation that is the root cause of the mass exodus. Whether Herr Honecker and his associates are capable of carrying them out remains to be seen.

If they aren't, the crisis will come to even more of a head.

Werner Holzer

(Frankfurter Rundschau, 2 October 1989)

Foreign Minister Genscher, right, and Minister of State Seiters of the Chancellor's Office bringing the good news to Prague. (Photo: AP)

■ DISARMAMENT

Superpowers vie for most spectacular proposals

After an intermezzo of hesitation the superpowers are now heading toward each other at some speed. Disarmament prospects are improving and long-standing taboos being dropped at such a rate that critical objections must surely seem to be little more than hairsplitting.

Have America and the Soviet Union at long last made a breakthrough in their joint quest for peace? Have they finally arrived at cooperation after decades of confrontation, followed by dialogue?

When such a coolly calculating advocate of power politics such as US Secretary of State James Baker officially proclaims this escalation of common sense, it almost assumes the status of a dogma in relations between Washington and Moscow.

At all events the most important change in relations between the superpowers has just been reaffirmed. Instead of sapping their strength in the arms race, America and Russia are increasingly concentrating on competing to see who has the more spectacular disarmament proposals.

Moscow's Mikhail Gorbachov has so far been well in the lead, but Washington's cautious George Bush is now trying to catch him up.

In the wake of his May Nato summit proposals on swift and drastic cuts in conventional potential in Europe, President Bush's chemical weapons reduction proposals at the UN have again dispelled doubts as to his courage to take a quantum leap in security policy.

The Bush initiative aims at a cornerstone of the global threat. Chemical weapons demonstrate more clearly than any other weapon of mass destruction the absurdity of the arms race.

The great powers' stockpiles are so full and potentially so dangerous that chemical weapons stockpiled in one's own pact territory generate almost as much fear as those stationed on enemy territory.

If President Bush's proposals are taken up, the Federal Republic of Germany, with its stockpiles of US chemical arms, will be one of the main beneficiaries.

But if hopes are to lead to reality, the Americans and Russians must join forces on the basis of confidence for years to come.

They alone, jointly, can bring about a global readiness to dispense with what has been called the "little guy's atomic bomb" and force unscrupulous Third World rulers to set aside any ideas of waging chemical warfare.

Only if America and Russia were to pool resources could the technical difficulties disposing of these toxic chemicals be surmounted.

The results of goodwill and readiness to make concessions may well come to light soon in another arms context.

Important hurdles have been cleared on the way toward strategic arms control. The Americans no longer insist on a ban on mobile ICBMs; the Russians are prepared to demolish their Krasnoyarsk radar installation and no longer insist on America scrapping SDI before they sign a Start treaty.

American laments that the Soviet Union has thus deprived Washington of a trump card don't hold water. The SDI bluff no longer stood the slightest chance of taking a trick at the strategic arms talks.

Now the poker game is over, the Start talks seem sure to be given a decisive fillip.

Time is short, and the reasons for impatience are characteristic of the change superpower relations have undergone.

Fears of an imminent clash are no longer the reason why delegations are under pressure; what worries them is anxiety lest Mr Gorbachov's experiments are brought to an abrupt end.

In the long term the Soviet reform leader stands to be best served by progress on disarmament, which would release urgently needed industrial capacity in the Soviet Union.

Further interlinking of superpower interests, as agreed at the Wyoming meeting between Mr Baker and Mr Shevardnadze, might also gain the Kremlin leader a breathing space.

But are the moves already agreed a decisive step in the right direction? Will they consolidate detente and enable the Soviet Union to concentrate fully on perestroika?

Calls for a summit soon are no help in the circumstances; they sound more like a clamour for a sure-cure solution.

Not even a summit meeting would be sufficient to fill the shelves in Soviet shops or to step up the productivity of Soviet collective farms.

More complicated challenges lie ahead if the two erstwhile arch-enemies are to join forces for more productive purposes.

Restructuring of the Soviet system remains the sine qua non. The West will not lend crucial assistance until it is enabled to do so in the Soviet Union.

From then on Moscow will be able to rely on US self-interest. The Americans have so far been subdued in enjoying their victory in the Cold War.

They now know they must not allow stubbornness to lose them the struggle for peace in the unstable Gorbachev era. The Bush administration's new-found flexibility toward the East testifies to this realisation.

Dieter Buhl

(Die Zeit, Hamburg, 29 September 1989)

Genscher takes wind out of Soviet sails

DER TAGESSPIEGEL

Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze told the UN General Assembly that the forces of revanchism were on the march again in Europe, trying to call post-war realities into question.

They were, he said, a threat to the progress toward peace envisaged by the superpowers.

In the past Soviet accusations of revanchism have constantly been levelled at Bonn. This time it wasn't entirely clear whether he meant Bonn alone or the forces that have set Eastern Europe in motion from the Baltic to Poland and Hungary.

One post-war reality is certainly being called into question in these countries: that the Soviet Union can expect, in the interest of Soviet security, Eastern Europe to retain communist rule and Soviet-style economic planning.

Mr Shevardnadze's statement almost read as though he wanted to call on the United States to counteract this trend, if only by refusing its support, and to defend the status quo in Germany and Eastern Europe.

In the circumstances Bonn's Hans-Dietrich Genscher did well not to mention Mr Shevardnadze's declaration in his speech to the UN General Assembly.

He certainly didn't feel Bonn was meant, so there was no need to rush to the Federal Republic's defence.

Herr Genscher took another opportunity of proving to the international community how far-fetched the Soviet Foreign Minister's allegations were should they happen to be levelled at the Federal Republic.

He turned to the new Polish Foreign Minister and assured him that the German people would continue not to dispute the Polish people's right to live within secure borders — and would not call them into question by making territorial demands.

This was a right and necessary move to make. It demonstrated that the emancipation movement in Eastern Europe need have no fear of a German threat. Any support received from Bonn will not be used to underpin future German claims.

We Germans are all the more readily entitled to say that within the framework of European integration German unity and self-determination are options that must be kept open.

(Der Tagesspiegel, Berlin, 28 September 1989)

Chemical arms talks are given a fillip

The competition between US President Bush and Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze at the UN General Assembly for the olive branch of disarmament could well lend the melancholy Geneva talks on banning chemical weapons fresh impetus.

Mr Bush made a similar attempt five years ago, as Vice-President, when he submitted comprehensive proposals to the Geneva conference, at which 40 countries are represented.

But in 1984 neither the United States nor the Soviet Union was determined to negotiate an international agreement eliminating chemical weapons.

The superpowers, who between them still have the largest stockpiles of chemical weapons by far, have been extremely circumspect in Geneva.

They have taken care not to relinquish prematurely military options that in several Afro-Asian countries, especially in the volatile Middle East, are now seen as an effective substitute for nuclear weapons as a deterrent and for use in retaliation.

The view held by a number of Middle Eastern governments and general staffs that chemical weapons could decide the outcome of a war poses a particularly serious threat to international security.

It does so because of the link between chemical weapons and missiles and long-range supersonic aircraft, which are in increasingly widespread use in the Middle East and Afghanistan.

A missile with a chemical warhead that has a range of several thousand kilometres presents a country with entirely new attack options.

These options are a growing threat to Europe, Turkey and the southern borders of the Soviet Union.

It is a threat to Nato territory, so both superpowers have every interest in calling the trend to a halt and setting an example by dispensing with the chemical weapons option.

As President Bush put it in New York, that would also free Europe from the "shadow of chemical warfare."

The stated readiness of the United States to scrap 98 per cent of America's chemical weapons stockpiles within eight years as soon as an internationally valid treaty reliably banning chemical weapons and manufacturing facilities within 10 years is signed in Geneva has brought a negotiated agreement within reach.

It seemed an even more distinct possibility when Mr Shevardnadze announced that the Soviet Union was prepared to eliminate all Soviet chemical weapons and produce no new ones even before agreeing to reciprocal terms with the United States.

Yet caution is advisable on this point. The main problem in connection with the reliable elimination of chemical weapons is its verification by international inspection. Effective control means inspection of chemical industry facilities and, in the West, inspection of private industry.

That presents problems in the context of international industrial competition, and there are fundamental differences between state-run and private enterprise economies in this respect.

Verification is much more difficult in the closed society of socialist states than in the open societies of the democratic West.

A further obstacle to an effective agreement is that Moscow and Washington have so far failed to agree on the size of existing chemical weapons stockpiles in their two countries.

The United States is not prepared to divulge the quantity and composition of its stockpiles, but they are estimated to amount to about 30,000 tons.

The Soviet Union has admitted to stockpiles totalling 50,000 tons, but Nato estimates the true figure to be several times higher.

A significant distinction may also be drawn, in the data debate, between drums of chemicals that have yet to be filled into delivery systems and the number of bombs and grenades stockpiled ready for use.

Mr Shevardnadze had the US modernisation programme in mind when he proposed an immediate bilateral end to the production of binary chemical weapons.

So detailed agreement will need to be reached between Washington and Moscow before speeches to the UN General Assembly are transformed into treaty terms.

Lothar Rühl

(Die Welt, Bonn, 29 September 1989)

The German Tribune

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■ REFUGEES

British media have mixed feelings as East German refugees vote with their feet



An Iron Curtain has descended on Europe, Britain's wartime Premier Winston Churchill said in 1946, establishing the keynote of foreign policy debate for the next four decades.

Now the Iron Curtain is being raised there is no sign of a comparable statesman in Britain or anywhere else in the West, and an appropriate comment has yet to be made.

True, the British media have provided accurate, detailed and often enthusiastic coverage of the dramatic way in which Hungary has opened its borders with the West and tens of thousands of East Germans have crossed into Austria.

The British Press is largely agreed that the German Question has been reopened, that reunification is back on the agenda and that communist ideology has been disproved once and for all by this mass exodus and by perestroika.

But the debate has been restricted to the media, and not one responsible British politician has yet said a word on the subject that might be termed quotable.

Edward Heath, the Tory ex-Premier, is tolerated more as a fossil in the Conservative Party than felt to hold views of high repute as those of an opinion-maker.

He once said that Britain had advocated German reunification because it knew it would never happen. Foreign Secretary John Major paid lip service to this sentiment on first meeting his German opposite number, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, in Bonn.

"The Germans have a right to self-determination," he said, "and we stand by this commitment."

There had, he said, been no change in the position held by "all British governments in recent decades" that the German desire for reunification deserved support.

Much though the exodus of refugees from the East may have affected the public debate, official British policy remains cautious, wait-and-see, unchanged.

William Waldegrave, Minister of State and No. 2 at the Foreign Office, referred in a radio debate to the Hungarians' "courageous decision" to open their borders.

But all that occurred to him in connection with Deutschlandpolitik was that the Federal Republic was constitutionally bound to accept anyone who claimed to be a German.

This was an oblique reference to widespread British fears that in 1997, when Hong Kong reverts to China, three and a half million Hong Kong-born Chinese with British passports might apply for the right of abode in Britain, their "mother country."

Britain is not obliged to take them in, and that is why British politicians have taken to emphasising that intra-German relationships are ties of a special kind.

Newspapers such as the liberal *Guardian* note that just as Britain would need to rely on European solidarity and assistance in connection with Hong Kong British passport-holders, the Federal Republic of Germany is entitled to political support now.

There is, of course, another reason for official caution in all comments on the German Question. Twice this century Britain has been forced to fight a world war to forestall German hegemony in Europe.

It cannot, arguably, be in Britain's interest now to permit reunification of the two German states and the emergence of a colossus in Central Europe that would inevitably, given the hard work, efficiency and sheer size of its population, be assured of political predominance on the Continent.

So the British media debate on the exodus of refugees from East Germany is full of contradictions. On two consecutive Sundays the conservative *Sunday Times* devoted several pages to reports on all aspects of the exodus of East German "holidaymakers" via Hungary.

In tones little short of rapturous, it said there could hardly be clearer evidence of the communist system's collapse than tens of thousands of East Germans "voting with their feet."

This somewhat naive delight in the refugees' successful crossing of the border was followed by more thoughtful commentaries on the political consequences.

Some read as though reunification, and with it German hegemony in Europe, was imminent. Even *The Economist* told its readers how many Olympic gold medals and what military power and economic potential a (German) nation of 78 million people with a GNP of $1,400bn would have.

The conservative *Daily Telegraph* referred to the "historic irony" of the idea of German unity recurring at the very moment Britain was commemorating victory over the bloody and barbarous excesses of German nationalism half a century ago.

It added, to be fair (and objective), that victory over communism was in sight, that a convincing democracy had been established in the Federal Republic and that Britain was committed by treaty obligations to support the peaceful striving for German reunification.

The *Sunday Telegraph* felt that a reunited Germany could not possibly be merely a larger, confidence-inspiring version of the Federal Republic. Much might be possible that was, as yet, inconceivable.

Eventually the British Press increasingly came to realise that neither German reunification nor the collapse of the GDR was imminent.

The Times even doubted, with reference to Germany's historic plethora of small states, whether the end of communism in the GDR would necessarily lead to the re-emergence of a single German state.

"A second, neutral German state must be borne in mind," the *Times* leader-writer felt.

The *Guardian* complained that the West was simply at a loss for a response to recent trends in the East Bloc, while the *Independent* felt it was time to stop thinking about the German Question in conventional geopolitical terms.

The Federal Republic was a stable democracy, the GDR — unlike Poland or Hungary — had no justification for existence without communism, and a reunited Germany could be compared neither with Bismarck's Reich nor with Hitler's.

The media debate is thus gradually clarifying the situation. After initial misgivings British opinion is coming round to the view that 55 million Britons could well live at peace with 77 million reunited Germans as long as they remained committed to democracy and formed part of both the European Community and the West.

Bonn's ambassador, Hermann von Richthofen, who has taken part in several radio and TV debates, is far from unhappy with the course the debate has taken.

The British media, he says, have given GDR refugees objective and sympathetic coverage. The German Question was as open as ever, including the problem of how a united Germany could be integrated in Europe without hegemony.

Despite occasional negative comments in the Press both the Conservative government and the Labour Opposition felt the Germans could naturally not be denied the right to self-determination.

Maybe it would be advisable to point out now and again that reunification was not imminent and that "we only want it provided our neighbours are agreeable and both sides approve."

That was a view Britain shared, with the result that progress might prove swifter than had been expected.

Reinhart Häcker

(Stuttgarter Zeitung, 28 September 1989)

US opinion is sympathetic on reunification

Tens of thousands of people leaving home and crossing the border aren't exactly a sensation for us Americans," my neighbour says. "They're almost an everyday occurrence."

This reference to the influx of Hispanic Americans from Mexico may put the number of East German refugees who have so far crossed from Hungary to Austria and the Federal Republic of Germany into perspective.

But Americans are no less aware that the East Germans voting with their feet are a consequence of developments in Poland, Hungary and the Soviet Union.

They are developments that are being followed carefully and attentively in the United States where it is appreciated that they may have consequences for divided Germany.

If the average American has any views on the subject, then they mainly amount to the question how America can help.

Staff at Bonn's embassy in Washington and at German consulates elsewhere in the United States report phone calls voicing interest and sympathy.

But the German Question, as seen by the average American, has always been a matter of learning to live with division and of pursuing a policy of small but gradual steps without losing patience.

Average Americans fail to realise why visiting politicians from the Federal Republic of Germany prefer not to refer to reunification and talk instead in terms of self-determination and national unity.

They feel that what belongs together ought not to be divided. The finer points of the debate are lost on many of them.

It began when Mr Gorbachov's reform course allowed Moscow's satellites unprecedented leeway.

The German Question also recurred when Bonn improved its relations with the Soviet Union while energetically advocating German interests in the short-range missile debate with Washington.

Last not least, of course, young East German refugees voting with their feet have put the German Question back on the agenda.

In occasional, rough-hewn contributions toward the debate, a debate virtually limited to columnists, politicians and political scientists, dissatisfaction is voiced.

It is a feeling of uneasiness at the prospect of an all-German economic giant that would predominate in Europe and choose its own allies.

Anxiety lest Bonn succumb to the blandishments of Soviet reunification promises and opt for neutrality rather than membership of the Western alliance and a leading role in European integration extends to the corridors of power in Washington.

Neither fear is shared by specialists in German affairs, however, and President Bush chose not to share them when he noted, at a recent Press conference, that it was for the Germans themselves to decide on reunification.

He for one did not believe that Western interests ran counter to German reunification, let alone that it might jeopardise peace in Western Europe.

This statement need not be taken entirely at face value. For nearly half a century the Allies have paid the German Question reassuring lip service, secure in the knowledge that it was a merely academic question.

Now, however, developments have arisen of which the repercusssions cannot be foreseen, and what seemed impossible yesterday might well prove possible tomorrow.

The United States has yet to draw up a policy concept with which to face this unknown future.

Assistant Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger noted in a much-quoted speech that the "stability" of tense relations between the superpowers had been superseded by a constellation "in which power and influence are shared by a number of states," giving rise to the threat of destabilisation.

Many members of his audience took this comment to be a sad recollection of the predictability that must be seen as having been a hallmark of the Cold War era.

It sounded a note of regret they registered with furrowed brows.

In other words, the superpowers are losing influence, and if the two German states were to quit their respective pacts Washington's security concept for Europe would be null and void.

As the United States equates security with military security, Washington would insist on determining the course to be taken, and it would do so regardless of protestations that reunification was a matter for the Germans themselves to decide.

This debate on the German Question has certainly brought home to Americans the threat of Washington being bowled over by events without having

Continued on page 5

FOCUS

Western left-wingers reluctant to face up to the failure of socialism



As tens of thousands of mainly young East Germans flee from the realities of socialism, some of their parents, evoking the spirit of Rosa Luxemburg, are rallying behind the banners of the new opposition group New Forum.

Quite a few members of the generation of 40-year-olds in the GDR still cling to Communist illusions.

Much to the delight of the left-wing establishment in the West their spokesmen believe and declare that the aim now must be to rid the "humane core of socialism" from symptoms of degeneration brought about by *Stalin alone* or by the bureaucracy of the ruling Socialist Unity Party (SED).

Like the supporters of Alexander Dubcek in Prague in 1968 they sang the *Internationale* with its human rights refrain in the streets of Leipzig.

East German socialist intellectuals and their friends in a number of SED niches, GDR parish priests who condemn capitalism, and quite a few managers of state-owned enterprises are not the first to try to save Karl Marx from the collapse of Communist dictatorship.

They had precursors in Budapest in 1956 and in Prague in 1968. At that time, too, there was a western claque which loudly complained that true socialism could suffer from a dismantling of existing socialism by the disappointed masses.

However, it is not the artist Bärbel Bohley or the lawyer Rolf Henrich, both exponents of the New Forum, who deserve criticism, but those west of the Elbe who dread a victory of western democracy *in the other part of Europe.*

There is a big difference between citizens of the GDR who have never lived in a democracy and who are roughly as old as the GDR itself and people like Günter Grass and Günter Gaus, who voice their concern about the survival of the socialist economic system and way of life in the GDR while sitting in a comfortable armchair in the Federal Republic of Germany.

Ever since a representative of the Catholic social doctrine has been head of government in Poland and Mikhail Gorbachov has at least created the impression that the Soviet Union could, if need be, do without a bit of Marx and Lenin, the left wing of German social democracy has been discernibly irritated.

Peter von Oertzen, for example, a member of the SPD executive and the head of its party college, warns the Soviet Union not to give in to capitalism.

The abolition of private ownership of the means of production and the "social planning and social control of production" will, he hopes, remain indispensable.

Oskar Lafontaine, who advised von Oertzen not to keep on holding up something which Gorbachov has already dropped, is an "inspired demagogue" in the eyes of his chided party colleague.

All left-wingers in the West are, of course, in favour of reforms between the Werra and the Volga. They always reaffirmed this during past decades whenever the people in East Bloc countries rebelled; during the breaks of "peaceful coexistence" they remained silent.

Like trade union leader Franz Steinkühler, for example, who announced in the union magazine *Metall:*

"The deeply humanistic idea of socialism is being perverted by systems of state bureaucracy."

Twenty years ago Milovan Djilas looked even further ahead. He claimed that it was not Stalin who denatured the system, but that socialism itself produces bureaucrats and, subsequently, despots.

Admittedly, what citizens such as Herr Steinkühler deservedly enjoy in the form of freedom and prosperity in the West resulted from a dissociation from Marx.

Freedom gained the upper hand wherever socialism became social democracy, and Communists bogged down in sectarianism, and wherever it was undisputed that the electorate could relieve political parties of their business of state and sanction political about-turns.

Peter von Oertzen, the Jusos (the SPD youth organisation) and Günter Gaus are not the only ones to warn against an overwhelming of the GDR by "the West German Pepsi-Cola society."

Their leftist-bourgeois sympathisers warn against turning back the clock in the GDR to the time when big landowners and great-power dreamers were in charge.

Not to mention the Americans. Isn't there a danger, critics claim, that a kind of blind support for materialism might replace the "longing for humane socialism" in what is still blood-red Prussia?

Those who talk and write in this manner have very little faith in human nature, in the level of information of the GDR population, and in free elections.

There is a, perhaps unwanted, linking of arms with critics such as Stefan Heym, the East Berlin dissident now living in the West, who announces on West German TV that he loves Rosa Luxemburg and hates Messerschmitt-Bölkow-Blohm and Daimler-Benz.

What an enviable left-wing bourgeois position to be established in our society and, in anticipation of the unstoppable development, to tell people in the other part of Germany what they should want: Pepsi or Daimler.

Every day of growing movement in the West-East scene leads to new surprises and even to a marching in step between extreme right- and left-wingers.

To the right of the party-political spectrum the voters of tomorrow are not being maltreated by social theories, but there are plenty of useless national ones.

An "Austrian solution" is regarded as taboo for the GDR and emphasis is placed on Germany's former eastern frontiers. Europe is also dismissed as an alternative to Germany.

How could the demand for "self-determination in freedom" assume a tangible quality? Through a sense of reality.

If the citizens of Saxony, Thuringia or Brandenburg want to simply run their state in a different way but not hand it back to the proprietors of 1945/46, if they wish to organise their educational system democratically but not in the same way as in Hamburg or Bavaria, and if they want a confederation instead of mechanistic reunification why shouldn't they be allowed to do so if their European neighbours have no objections?

Citizens who have endured 12 years of Hitler and 44 years of Ulbricht and Honecker do not need others to tell them what to do.

The left's consternation in the West is not feigned. It is worth recalling the circumstances of its political development. Many left-wingers still have not recovered from the illusions of the Prague Spring.

In 1968 they believed that the theory of the convergence of *systems was coming* true; Communism would become more humane and more *socialist* and West German capitalism *would dispose* of itself following the unpopular *Grand* Coalition of Kurt Georg *Kiesinger's* Christian Democrats and *Willy Brandt's* Social Democrats.

In Warsaw the SPD remained more faithful to the Communist "reformers" than any Pole.

In Nicaragua SPD left-wingers practised polemical solidarity against Ronald Reagan during joint coffee picking with the red Sandinistas.

An emotive Luise Rinser put Lenin and Kim Il Sung on a par with Saint Francis of Assisi.

The aberrations of the left never cease, every outbreak of reform is accompanied by demands for the exposure of Marxist skeletons.

In 1959 the Polish satirist Jerzy Lec already asked this choir of the unwavering: "Who asks the thesis and the antithesis whether they want to become a synthesis anyway?"

Helga Grebing is not the only Social Democrat to contradict the Peter von Oertzens.

The question, she writes, is whether "New Thinking" in the East really wants "socialism in the West" and whether it might not prefer cooperative capitalist *regimes.*

If a small *minority* of democratically and humanistically motivated *citizens* in the GDR choose Rosa *Luxemburg* as their ideological figurehead *and make* mistakes in their *analysis of the political* realities of the world in 1989 because they have never been able to fully experience that world, they do not deserve shallow criticism.

If, however, people who are otherwise silent accept that their existence is part of "capitalist reality," albeit in a long since reformed form, they deserve to be heavily criticised.

Stefan Heym, yet again on western TV, snapped at CDU business manager Volker Rühe that he should not gloat over "his" victory — after all, the victory of the West.

As if victories are at stake! What is at stake is enabling people who are living and suffering here and now to act in accordance with the maxim that all power emanates from the people.

Those who believed that Communists would turn into "true Socialists" have been proved wrong. This was shown by Yugoslavia in 1948, which "reformed" itself so miserably following the break with Stalin that one crisis still follows another.

The GDR needs self-determination, not misleading doctrines.

Jürgen Wahl

(Rheinischer Merkur/Christ und Welt, Bonn, 29 September 1989)

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ANNIVERSARY

Post-war decisions that paved the way for a successful democratic system

The writer, Tübingen political scientist Theodor Eschenburg, 84, was a senior government official in the US Zone prior to the "Zero Hour" he here describes.

The Federal Republic of Germany came into existence on 20 September 1949, a date set by the Western Allied high commissioners once the Federal President and Chancellor had been elected and the Federal Cabinet appointed.

The establishment of the new political order answered questions which had already been on the minds of many Germans during the final years of the war.

What will happen to Germany when the war is over? Will there ever again be a sovereign German government? Is there a danger of civil war or even anarchy? How will the occupying powers react?

In their own interest the four allied powers, the United States, the Soviet Union, Britain and France, made sure that a revolutionary situation was unable to develop.

At the same time they rendered a service to Germany which cannot be overrated.

The *Stunde Null* (Zero Hour) only lasted from the brief moment when German rule collapsed until the moment the rule of the enemy troops began.

Many Germans who had listened to *foreign* radio stations during the final phase of the war already knew about plans to divide Germany into four zones.

Joint military occupation by several states was nothing new; it had been practised in France in 1814 and in the Rhineland after World War I.

The World War II Allies, however, had insisted on unconditional surrender and subsequently assumed total power in Germany.

Almost at the same time the fundamental political differences between the three Western powers and the Soviet Union became clear.

Who could have expected a Soviet official to govern in his own occupied zone on the basis of principles other than those he had been taught to regard as sacrosanct?

The Iron Curtain, however, had not yet descended. The supreme ruling body, the Allied Control Council, set about shaping Germany's future.

As Council decisions could only be taken unanimously, problems were inevitable.

In their respective zones of occupation, however, the victorious powers had sole jurisdiction.

The Western Allies seized this opportunity and began to set up a new political order.

They appointed Germans without a Nazi past as mayors and heads of the administrative districts. Consultative bodies were set up at district and local government levels.

The Western Allies formed these bodies from representatives of the four largest parties banned by Hitler: the Centre Party, the Democrats, the Social Democrats and, out of consideration for the Soviet Union, the Communists.

They adopted a similar approach for the composition of editorial staff. Each group had 25 per cent of the seats in these all-party bodies. The same applied to the first governments of the *Länder* (states), although the parties were represented with varying strength in these cases.

Although the Russians more or less followed suit initially in their own zone the Social Democrats (SPD) were forced to merge with the Communists (KPD) in May 1946, forming the Socialist Unity Party (SED).

The all-party decision by the Western powers, on the other hand, had a *prioritising effect.*

One of its objectives was the democratisation of Germany. The Western powers did not want to entrust the beginning of this process to the Germans for fear of Nazi infiltration.

They therefore began with a *verordnete Demokratie,* a prescribed democracy, only too aware of the fateful experiences of the Weimar Republic.

On the ballot papers of the last free Reichstag elections in 1932, for example, there were thirty political parties.

To ensure the workability of a new German democracy, but also in the interest of their own administration, the Western powers decided to keep the number of parties as low as possible.

A two-party system, as proposed by a number of German experts, was flatly rejected by the Allies. They feared that this would lead to political polarisation.

At the same time they had to avoid favouring any particular political direction through their authorisation procedure.

They took the four parties with which they were already familiar as their yardstick. All other applications were turned down.

The Democrats, Social Democrats and the Communists more or less continued the political tradition established by their parties before 1933.

The majority of the Catholic Centre Party joined forces with the Protestant Liberals and the moderate conservatives to form the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and the Christian Social Union (CSU).

If Germans had been allowed to decide freely immediately after the war, a larger number of parties would undoubtedly have resulted.

The next step in the political reconstruction of Germany was the holding of elections.

The Americans examined the proposals on how to organise local elections submitted by the *Länder* governments. The British military government set up a German advisory committee.

The Germans virtually had no say in the matter, on the other hand, in the French zone.

One might have expected the occupying powers to introduce the electoral laws existing in their own countries in their respective occupation zones.

Britain, for example, was only familiar with the majority vote (first-past-the-post) system: the candidate with the highest number of votes in a constituency is elected.

This system was unfair, but generally guaranteed the formation of a workable one-party government in Britain.

In dejected post-war Germany, however, it was not clear how elections would turn out.

The *first local government elections* were therefore intended as a barometer of public opinion and a dress rehearsal for future elections.

It was feared, however, that the basic majority vote system would stir up undesired emotions in the German population.

The final vote in the electoral advisory committee is the British zone revealed the differing views on this issue.

Seven members favoured the basic majority vote system, seven the system of proportional representation, and two the British proposal for a combination of both.

According to this proposal two thirds of the representatives should be elected in the constituencies on the basis of the majority vote system and a third elected on regional lists in accordance with proportional representation.

The British military government *opted for the combined system.*

Although the press did very little to support the system the other two military governments also decided to adopt a similar system.

The Allies declared that the electoral law selected for local government elections should not in any way anticipate the decision on how to organise the *Landtag* (state assembly) elections.

With a number of reservations, however, it did have this effect.

The tendency in the three Western zones was astonishingly similar. Apart from a few modifications the electoral law for Bundestag elections has also not been changed fundamentally up to this very day.

In an effort to make the situation a little less complex the Allies also began with the territorial reorganisation of their respective spheres of control.

The British initially retained the *Länder* and provinces in their zone as administrative units, but felt that ten, including the city states of Hamburg and Bremen, were too many.

Wilhelm Hinrich Kopf, the *Oberpräsident* of Hanover, wanted this province to merge with the smaller provinces of Oldenburg and Brunswick, but his idea was not welcomed.

In November 1946 the British military government then ordered the creation of the *Land* of Lower Saxony, comprising Hanover, Oldenburg, Brunswick and Schaumburg-Lippe.

The British military government was equally resolute in its construction of the most populous *Land* in its zone.

Rhineland and Westphalia were the two largest Prussian provinces. With the support of Konrad Adenauer the former mayor of Düsseldorf, Robert Lehr, advocated a merger of the two.

He ran up against considerable opposition on the part of the *Oberpräsident* of Westphalia, Rudolf Amelunxen, and the majority of Social Democrats led by Kurt Schumacher.

An agreement between the two provinces could not be expected. Because of the opposition the British waited some time before ordering the merging of the two provinces and of the small Land of Lippe-Detmold to form North Rhine-Westphalia on 21 August 1946.

The reorganisation of the American zone was not confronted by the same problems.

In autumn 1945 and with German approval the parts of Hesse-Darmstadt to the right of the Rhine and the provinces of Nassau and Kurhessen were combined to form the *Land* of Hesse.

Apart from the creation of Baden-Württemberg in 1952 the *Länder* created by the military governments are still the same today.

Their constitutions, drawn up by the state assemblies, also required the approval of the military governments.

De jure these constitutions were imposed upon the German population, but *de facto* they were carefully modified structures developed at *Land* level.

Allied experts were involved in the consultations to prevent rejection wherever possible.

The Americans in particular took care not to anticipate the structuring of a constitution at a federal level through any decision at *Land* level.

The Bavarian constitution provided for a head of state. The American military government, however, made it clear that it would refuse to acknowledge any such institution.

The idea was rejected by one vote in the constituent assembly of the Bavarian Landtag, together with a provision for a planned economy.

One provision, Article 179, had to be included to prohibit trade and industrial associations from exercising governmental power and to rule out the compulsory membership of these associations that was originally planned.

In Hesse the military governor suspended the implementation of Article 41, which related to nationalisation, on the grounds that the United States would not permit socialisation in Germany before a superordinate German government was set up.

In Württemberg-Hohenzollern the American military government rejected a draft constitution submitted by the CDU because of excessively extensive powers for the government and its doubts about its sufficiently democratic character.

It cannot be claimed that these decisions by the Western Allies were taken thoughtlessly or arbitrarily. There was thorough preliminary groundwork, in *cooperation with Germans.*

The decisions of the immediate post-war period have been respected and at least not fundamentally changed in the Federal Republic of Germany.

They paved the way for a successful governmental order and gave impetus to the consultations of the Parliamentary Council, precursor of the Bonn Bundestag, which drew up Basic Law, the 1949 constitution.

Theodor Eschenburg

(Die Zeit, Hamburg, 29 September 1989)

Continued from page 3

had enough time to frame clear ideas on a political restructuring of Europe. Specialists on German affairs at the State Department have long been aware that Bonn politicians want to end the division of Europe and do not have visions of restoring Bismarck's Reich when they think in terms of national unity.

They also appreciate that this European solution will take time and that the European Community, not Nato, will be the link via which unity is regained.

Speculation about the possibility of German reunification could play a part in making the Bush administration embark on an intensive quest for a vision in the future of Europe.

Jürgen Koar

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, Cologne, 27 September 1989)

■ **BUSINESS**

Merger policy differences cause a gritting of teeth in Paris and Bonn

It will take some time before German competition policy is understood in France," said Bonn Economics Minister Helmut Haussmann in Brussels.

The latest compromise proposal on the introduction of a European merger control submitted by the French government, which currently holds the presidency of the European Council of Ministers, *betrays very little empathy* for the German stance.

The philosophical rift between the French and German economic policies seems unbridgable.

France does not want the pros and cons of possible mergers to be assessed purely on the basis of competition criteria.

After all, who cares about the anti-competitive repercussions of market domination if a huge conglomerate can be created which is able to match the American and Japanese giants in terms of power and influence?

French newspapers even suspect that the West German obsession with competition is merely an attempt to prevent the necessary restructuring of industry between Lille and Marseilles.

The French at any rate are convinced that they have a great deal of catching up to do in the field of business concentration vis-à-vis the British and the Germans.

Bonn for its part wants to keep industrial policy away from Brussels and *wants the European Commission to* base its merger control decisions on competition policy criteria alone.

It feels that a merger should be prohibited if there is a subsequent risk of a creation or strengthening of a market dominant position in at least two member states of the European Community.

According to Bonn Economics Minister Haussmann European firms can only win the race against their Japanese and American competitors if they are forced to face up to working competition on their own markets.

He insists that the internal growth of a company is much better than expanding through the acquisition of larger units — a flawless line of argument.

Haussmann's credibility, however, has been damaged by his decision to give the go-ahead, under certain conditions, to the Daimler-Benz takeover of Messerschmitt-Bölkow-Blohm (MBB).

Fellow member states accuse Bonn of hypocrisy. Why, they ask, is Haussmann so fussy about mergers in Brussels but willing to stand sponsor to the creation of one of the world's biggest industrial groups back home?

Lamentations to the effect that the ministerial authorisation in this case was the absolute exception do not help.

Haussmann points to the Argus-eyed public which makes it impossible for him to stray from the path of competition policy virtue.

He criticises the fact that there is no strict parliamentary and public control in Brussels — let alone the two-stage German procedure to be introduced soon, in which the Federal Cartel Office examines the competition aspects first and the Economics Minister then weighs up political considerations.

There are no plans yet to set up an independent European cartel office. The European Commission has sole competence in the field of merger control.



The seventeen European Community commissioners would burst out laughing if their merger control activities were to be extended to take into account industrial policy aspects as well as competition.

How could they decide whether the disadvantages for one member state are outweighed by the advantages for another?

Would the creation of a worldwide operating French company group with modern research and development capacities, for example, be justified in view of the resultant elimination of any variety in the supply of electrical appliances in the Federal Republic of Germany?

Neither London nor Bonn want to entrust such highly explosive decisions to Eurocrats in Brussels.

Paris, of course, also has no intention of subjecting all its industrial policy hopes to the arbitrariness of the custodians of competition in Brussels.

In her latest compromise proposal, therefore, the French Minister for Europe, Edith Cresson, has come up with a completely new variant of the German two-stage procedure.

First of all, the European Commission should assess whether an envisaged merger would damage competition in the Community.

Individual member states would then have the final say in order to be able to protect their "legitimate interests." Each member state should submit a list of these interests, which, if France has its way, would not only include security policy but also social, regional and branch-related policies.

After all, Paris claims, French industry must be safeguarded against excessive foreign control.

To make matters worse, Madame Cresson added the notorious "reciprocity" clause to her proposal. For Paris the fact that the Americans and the Japanese can merrily buy up European firms while everything possible is being done overseas to prevent European firms from moving into overseas markets is unbearable.

Bonn and London insist that all these misgivings and considerations are irrelevant for competition policy.

Haussmann warned that the German cartel office would reappraise all European Commission decisions if the French re-examine mergers authorised or prohibited by Brussels in the light of their own industrial policy.

This would turn European merger control into a farce.

Despite these marked differences of opinion the European Community hopes to get a common merger control signed and sealed by the end of the year.

There is general agreement on the need for such a policy. Even the most reluctant British opponents to the idea accept that national cartel authorities would be unable to handle the situation on the internal Community market after 1992.

Furthermore, Italy and a few of the smaller Community states have no competition authorities at all. They are worried that their firms may be swallowed up by a handful of huge industrial groups.

Following their political haggling, ministers have agreed on when a "Community-wide" concentration shall be deemed to exist.

The European Commission will step in as a merger overseer if the merger candidates achieve a worldwide turnover of at least five million ECU (a good DM10bn). National authorities retain sole competence beneath this threshold.

If the Community-wide volume of business of merger participants amounts to less than DM250m or if two-thirds of the total volume of business takes place in a single member state the respective national authorities also retain exclusive powers to vet the merger.

Officials in Brussels estimate that, on the basis of these criteria, between fifty and sixty merger cases would be subject to their control each year.

The creation of a single European market, however, is likely to encourage merger activity.

Between 1982 and 1987 the number of merger cases in the European Community already increased from 117 to 303. Most of these mergers — over two thirds in 1987 alone — were effected between partners of the same nationality.

The Community is by no means fallow land in terms of competition policy.

The European Commission can rap the knuckles of any firm which draws up anti-competitive arrangements or abuses its market power. It also intends retaining these powers in future beneath the five million ECU threshold.

A prior control with clear decisions and conditions, however, would undoubtedly benefit all parties concerned.

Petra Münster

(Rheinischer Merkur/Christ und Welt, Bonn, 22 September 1989)

Europe 1992: opportunities and risks

As the deadline for the creation of a single European market draws near, medium-sized firms are beginning to realise the urgent need to assess their own opportunities and risks in tomorrow's Europe and to develop a strategy.

The leap from a national to a European market involves uncertain risks for firms inexperienced in importing and exporting. Export transactions are credit transactions, but with greater uncertainties:

- Suppliers find it much more difficult to control foreign buyers and check their credit standing than domestic buyers.
- There is a lack of sound and readily available background information; domestic sources of information are inadequate.
- The legal provisions for creditor protection are inadequate.
- Litigation is expensive and often unsatisfactory due to the fact that legal norms and procedural provisions differ from German laws.

Reservations of ownership pending payment for goods cannot be agreed because of the lack of corresponding legal stipulations or cannot be realised because of the distances involved.

The proper partner for the minimisation of these risks are credit insurance companies. They help prevent or limit the loss of receivables outstanding.

Exporters can choose between private export credit insurance (AKW) and the Federal Government's cover possibilities through the *Ausfuhr-Pauschal-Gewährleistung* (APG).

Government export guarantees make sense if export transactions are with state-trading countries or with countries which are politically unstable.

The provision of insurance cover against political risks leads to additional costs and is not necessary for trade with OECD countries, which account for over 80 per cent of German exports.

In these cases exporters would do better to turn to special private insurers for cover against economic risks.

Europe '92, however, not only means new opportunities and risks in the field of exports; internal trade will also change.

Competitive pressures will increase as a result of new suppliers.

Although the quality and quantity of the suppliers moving into the market will vary from one branch to the next precautionary measures should be taken early enough.

The probability of insolvency is likely to increase on domestic markets and losses of receivables outstanding will probably occur more often overnight than has been the case so far. To provide cover for firms with respect to their internal debts receivable from commodity deliveries in the production, distribution and services sectors companies should conclude an internal credit insurance.

The commercial credit insurance (WKV) not only provides comprehensive insurance protection, but adapts to the customer structure, the required dates of payment, the terms of delivery and the customs of the branch.

The WKV has no fixed rates: the size of the contract, the average periods of payment, the customer structure and the realisability of the reservation of ownership determine the rate of premium. The lower the risks, the lower the prices.

The *Europa-Police* (Europe policy) caters for the special needs of small and medium-sized firms. It provides insurance cover for businesses with an annual turnover of up to DM4m for claims resulting from commodity deliveries and services on the domestic market and in other parts of Europe (with the exception of state-trading countries).

Domestic and foreign claims are included in the same low-cost premium. Adjusted to allow for the size and structure of the company concerned policy handling is easy and uncomplicated.

Credit insurance, however, is more than just protecting liquidity and revenue. As the payment claims are handed over to a credit institution credit lines can be extended, thus extending the financial scope for opening up new markets. (The Export Credit Company — AKA — recognises both the private export credit insurance and the government cover.)

Credit insurance is also more than "just" an instrument for financial management. Credit insurers operate as central risk offices, employing the latest technologies and a network of international contacts to gather data on firms, branches and markets.

They possess a broad spectrum of experience, an absolutely essential asset for the European internal market.

Hubert Beuler

(Deutsches Allgemeines Sonntagsblatt, Hamburg, 22 September 1989)

■ **CONFERENCE SCENE**

Rays of hope at IMF and World Bank

Nothing is ever entirely on the square, but this year's annual meeting of the IMF and the World Bank in Washington, D.C., was not heavily overcast.

The international economy, in particular, is booming, with the emphasis of growth having shifted from the United States to Western Europe and South-East Asia. Some feel the dollar is too dear. Trade and payments flows are too far out of balance. Interest rates are bound to increase.

But otherwise everything was fine and dandy at the annual gathering of a gigantic financial organisation that has grown so preoccupied with itself as to call its efficiency into question.

Was it really? No, not by a long chalk. For one there is Poland, a suitable case for treatment envisaged by the IMF and the World Bank, and that is not even to mention the debt crisis.

Sovereign debts first surfaced as a serious problem at Toronto in 1982. This year was the eighth time it featured on the Bretton Woods organisations' agenda.

This time the background was slightly less gloomy. For the first time the developing countries' debts, totalling well over $1,300bn, are not higher than they were a year ago.

From 1985 till 1987 they grew steadily, at a rate of 10 per cent a year.

Then there was the Brady Plan, proposed by US Treasury Secretary James Brady, never a fully-fledged plan maybe, but it has certainly started the ball rolling.

Agreement has been reached on Mexico's debts, and terms are shortly to be agreed with the Philippines. We are crawling out of the debt crisis at a snail's pace, but at least there are signs of movement.

This modest ray of hope really is remarkable. The crisis had previously gone from bad to worse even though, according to internal IMF study papers, it no longer threatened the international financial system.

Bankers may find it hard to explain to private customers why they must repay their debts in full when entire countries have debts waived wholly or in part, but *partial* debt remission is no longer anathema to the banking community.

In Mexico's case, for instance, one of three options is a 35-per-cent debt remission. That isn't going to floor German banks, which in some cases have already written off between 70 and 80 per cent of these shaky debts against [illegible]

For US banks, which have been less generously provided with value adjustment, or tax write-off, facilities by their own government, it is another matter.

Yet some of them, larger US banks, have made similar provisions, hoping on the quiet that Washington might yet agree to a tax break. Chase Manhattan, for instance, is said to have written off $1.5bn in sovereign debts outstanding.

Either way, the Americans hold the key to a partial debt remission, especially where Latin American countries are concerned.

On both sides of the Atlantic taxpayers will then have to foot part of the bill even though the banks are mainly to blame for not having loaned money to the Third World solely to finance exports.

The banks literally turned borrowed money straight into cash, raising new loans to repay the old.

The developing countries are partly to blame too, having run up debts irresponsibly. So is the IMF; many departures were only possible under its aegis.

Until the early 1970s the IMF functioned as a kind of inflation machine in its defence of fixed exchange rates. It now seems to function as a debt machine.

The distinction between its role and that of the World Bank is growing steadily less clear, gradually calling into question the need for two separate organisations with their countless officials.

Are the IMF and the World Bank still in keeping with the ideas Keynes envisaged in Bretton Woods?

But doubts such as these make no more headway than coming to terms with the past does. What matters is to enable the developing countries to catch up with the future.

To which must be added, in the same breath as it were, that both Third World and US debts seem far from reassuring.

America's foreign debts total $1,250bn, or nearly as much as those of all Third World countries combined, as against foreign assets and claims totalling a mere $850bn.

The cost of funding US debts is steadily increasing, plunging America from trading deficit into a current account deficit. And high US budget deficits tend to push up world interest rates. No-one knows where it will all end. Even so, the United States naturally continues to be a first-class name in international credit markets.

So do Third World countries such as Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, Malaysia, Thailand — and India — that regularly fulfil their debt commitments.

This is a fact that is often overlooked, but these Pacific basin states deliberately set themselves apart from others who fail to meet interest and capital payment deadlines.

And apart from a few critical comments by New Delhi, there are no signs that these good debtors have any intention of suddenly saying they want partial remission of *their* debts too.

This group of countries also demonstrates what most of the 17 most heavily indebted countries, with sovereign debts totalling well over $500bn, lack: a clean and realistic economic policy that hasn't lapsed into corruption.

What they need is a policy that harnesses resources for country and people, not just for a handful of the upper class who transfer their capital to the West.

They include Venezuela and Brazil, which may soon no longer be able even to service its domestic debts.

Waiving some of their debts, which may seriously jeopardise the survival of a number of banks, will not help them much. Not even a fresh supply of loans will do that as long as these circumstances fail to change.

In the three-cornered relationship of reason that links banks, governments and the Bretton Woods organisations the debtor countries must play the part allotted to them.

It is simply too feeble an excuse to use the IMF, somewhat hidebound by red tape though it may have become, as a whipping boy merely for keeping to its own statutes and insisting on domestic economic reforms that governments have shirked for decades before bailing countries out.

But rays of hope do exist. As everything else has failed to deliver the goods, more and more countries are turning to market economics. That and the long march out of the debt crisis are the unexciting but encouraging message from Washington.

Franz Thoma

(Süddeutsche Zeitung, Munich, 28 September 1989)

Plan now, Montreal energy gathering is told

The results of the 14th world energy conference in Montreal are clear and leave little or no margin for interpretation.

World demand will continue to increase strongly in the decades ahead, accompanied by a marked increase in carbon dioxide output and the greenhouse effect.

The outlook for non-CO_2 energy options was viewed much more pessimistically in Montreal than by forecasts made in the early 1980s.

The crisis in public acceptance of atomic energy has slowed down markedly the pace of development originally expected for nuclear power.

As for so-called gentle energy alternatives, there are no signs of a technological breakthrough that might herald their market introduction on a wide scale.

The figures debated in Montreal cannot be disregarded in the domestic debate. "Global problems call for global solutions," as Canadian Premier Brian Mulroney said in his opening speech.

Countries must cooperate much more closely to make environment-friendly energy supplies possible. Verbal statements of intent at international conferences must now be followed by deeds.

Energy investment must be made so far in advance that playing for time will no longer do. The risks of the various energy options must be weighed against each other.

There can be no denying the continued existence of considerable scope for improving energy efficiency.

The developing countries need financial assistance to introduce environment-friendly, energy-saving techniques, but the Third World cannot expect unconditional aid.

Painstaking checks are a 'must'

Experience has shown that international organisations must keep up painstaking checks to ensure that funds are invested in technologies appropriate to a country's needs rather than in prestige projects.

The principle of national sovereignty must be slightly modified in the long-term self-interest of the developing countries themselves.

Conversely, the industrialised countries must be prepared to help with finance and with the transfer of know-how.

The distinction between soft and hard energy is misleading. All energy systems, when used on a large scale, create ecological problems.

What counts is to carry out long-term checks of environment-compatibility in order to strike a global balance between the risks and opportunities of individual energy options.

It would be irresponsible to opt out of any of the alternatives at the present stage.

A major consequence of the energy forecasts discussed in Montreal was the realisation that a new international division of labour is urgently needed where the use of energy options is concerned.

A substantial structural change must take place in the energy balance sheets

Handelsblatt WIRTSCHAFTS- UND FINANZZEITUNG

of the Western industrialised world in particular.

Greater use must be made of non-CO_2 or at least low-CO_2 energy techniques. They include both so-called regenerative energies and nuclear power, natural gas and a new and much more efficient generation of coal-fired power stations.

As a rule these systems are very capital-intensive, so much so that only affluent economies can afford them.

In the long term petroleum will be beset by grave geopolitical risks, proven reserves being mainly in politically unstable areas.

Oil consumption in the developing countries will continue to increase at above-average rates in the decades ahead, whereas the industrialised countries have ample scope to develop substitutes at fairly moderate expense.

This applies to both the generation of electric power and the harnessing of heat. In transport and chemicals, however, economic alternatives have failed to emerge.

Even so, oil efficiency can be intensified markedly in both sectors.

A wide range of small steps must be taken to do justice to the challenges that lie ahead.

Improvements in safety are both possible and indispensable where atomic energy is concerned, and the Federal Republic of Germany could pioneer them.

Its nuclear safety provisions and multiple safety systems would be an important contribution toward greater international precautions.

As the Montreal conference was told, greater international standardisation is a further means of developing safety reserves.

Global reduction in carbon dioxide emission will be a tough task. "Think global, act national" was the slogan at last year's climate conference in Toronto.

Delegates were told that the carbon dioxide burden would need to be eased drastically in the decades ahead if irreversible climate changes were to be forestalled.

The figures presented in Montreal indicate that CO_2 emission is likely to more than double by the year 2020. All industrialised countries must embark on precautions.

There must be a trailblazer, and it would do the Federal Republic of Germany no harm to pave the way on this issue.

That cannot mean opting out of atomic energy. Anyone who takes the greenhouse effect seriously must be prepared both to use energy more rationally and to develop marketable alternatives.

For the foreseeable future regenerative options will simply not be available in sufficient quantity to ensure an adequate supply of "environment-friendly energy for tomorrow."

So national bridges to the future need to be as widely based as possible. Then, and then only, they can set an international example.

Heinz J. Schürmann

(Handelsblatt, Düsseldorf, 25 September 1989)

■ FINANCE

Banks bail out retail chain: massive collapse averted

Creditor banks have put together a package to rescue the retail chain, Co-op, from becoming one of the biggest cases of bankruptcy in Germany since the war. Claims against Co-op total 2.73 billion marks. In addition, state prosecutors have been investigating allegations of irregularities. Here, Günter Buschmann looks at the background and describes how some imaginative accounting habits kept the firm alive when it was clinically dead. The story, for the Hamburg weekly, *Deutsches Allgemeines Sonntagsblatt*, appeared shortly before the rescue package was announced.

Co-op supervisory board chairman Hans Friderichs, who as Economics Minister in Bonn was widely over-rated, has met his match in the bid to bail out the Co-op, the retail chain that used to be a major asset of the trade union movement.

In the Co-op's case the difference was that the men he pitted his wits against, and who proved more than a match for him, were able to look on from overseas as he stumbled round the traps they had laid.

Bernd Otto, the former Co-op board chairman, and a man many underestimated, has been following events in what can only be called the Co-op Affair from his new home in South Africa.

It may well go down in the history of European white-collar crime as the worst case in a field that has included competition ranging from the Swedish match king, Ivar Kreuger, to the German trade union-owned housing corporation Neue Heimat. And he can pride himself on having staged the proceedings.

The erstwhile trade union-owned Co-op was said last October by the Hamburg newsweekly *Der Spiegel* to have been systematically bled dry by a small group of racketeers among its own top management.

It was plunged into debts that were more than it could handle, but as the racketeers, headed by Bernd Otto, held the commanding heights of management, supervision and control (not always visibly), no-one noticed.

Co-op shares reached their highest-ever quotations at a time when, by conventional criteria, the group was not just broke but bankrupt.

Now, 11 months later, the house of cards has collapsed. The creditors have lost most of their money. Herr Friderichs, the man in charge of the rescue bid, is in an unhappy position.

He once was spokesman (roughly equivalent to chairman) for the board of Dresdner Bank, one of the country's Big Three, but this time the banks refused to back his rescue proposals, forcing him to seek what is called composition of the group's debts and taking the Co-op to the brink of ruin.

The creditors may have reached a last-minute agreement, making composition of the group's debts unnecessary, but its reputation has suffered an irreparable blow.

Bernd Otto and his plenipotentiary Klaus-Peter Schröder-Reinke, a trained company accountant, took the world by surprise, showing it how a firm that was fundamentally insolvent could be kept apparently flourishing and growing for years by cooking the books and designing a maze of subsidiaries, parents and siblings. And all the time the money had long been spirited away.

The Co-op can now be seen to have been a *co*operative society for *O*tto & *P*artners rather than the Co-operative Wholesale Society of yesteryear.

Yet it is still an *Aktiengesellschaft*, or public limited company, and German company law requires there to be separate management and supervisory boards as part of a system of statutory checks and balances.

How, then, could a group with a payroll of 46,000 be run by a handful of people as their personal property without anyone even noticing?

Above all, how did they manage to cook balance sheets, profit and loss accounts and statements for creditors so ingeniously as to run up liabilities of between DM2.7bn and DM3bn more than the group's assets?

There are various ways of cooking a company's books to make its financial position appear sounder than it really is. Many of them are perfectly legal.

To minimise tax liabilities companies draw up a fiscal balance sheet, for instance. It lists income and expenditure so as to make exhaustive use of tax avoidance options.

Depreciation allowances and assets are valued at fiscal rather than at market rates. Holidays staff have not taken by the year's end are entered as a profit-shrinking liability even though they must be taken by the end of the first quarter of the next year.

This, then, is the tax-purposes balance sheet. There is also a commercial balance sheet, also perfectly legal, which is drawn up for shareholders and creditors.

The commercial balance sheet relies on market values and commercial criteria. Its aim is to make the company appear to be in good shape and its profit status better than as declared to the tax authorities.

The taxman is interested in pre-tax profits. The shareholder is paid a dividend on profits after tax. A certified accountant must check and endorse both sets of accounts.

The management feels small shareholders don't need to know the true profit situation. Otherwise they would clamour for higher dividends.

One is reminded of the classic comment by Fürstenberg, Bismarck's banker, that shareholders are dumb and insolent: dumb because they buy shares and insolent because they expect a dividend.

So there is a third, internal balance sheet. This confidential document is drawn up strictly for the board, for large shareholders and for the company's main creditors.

That is to say, it is drawn up for their use as long as the company is still on the straight and narrow. Once it is bent, as the Co-op was, the internal balance sheet is strictly for the board only.

Comparison of book values will suddenly show stock or machinery valued at nil for fiscal purposes and at 30 per cent of its replacement cost for commercial purposes to have a resale value of 60 or even 90 per cent.

Does the managing director drive a 20-year-old company Rolls Royce? In both official balance sheets it will have been written down to a book value of nil. In reality it is probably worth more than it originally cost.

These are called hidden reserves. Other variations, legal and illegal, involve transactions with associated companies at home and abroad.

There are many ways of ensuring the profits are made mainly in countries where taxation is low. Control contracts and profit transfer agreements can be put to tax-efficient use too.

An imaginative accountant finds it all most challenging and exhilarating. Some will tackle the task, especially the constant skirmishes with the taxman, with criminal energy. Borderlines are often vague, and most people have a slightly criminal bent.

At the Co-op these borderlines had ceased to exist. Herr Otto and his partners, crazed by the nouveau riche desire for the expensive insignia of a Hollywood life-style, brushed aside the checks and balances of company law.

Instead, they dreamt up ways of ensuring that they were in charge of themselves, as it were. They succeeded in doing so by a complicated system of concealing who really owned what.

Once the original Co-op had been made an *Aktiengesellschaft* and the trade unions had sold their 39-per-cent share in the group the new management set up a number of organisations that held the Co-op's capital and others to control the controllers, as it were.

In next to no time the Co-op had a network of about 500 associated companies, but the secret turntables of its financial transactions were unassuming villas on Lake Lucerne or in the Cayman Islands.

From their days as trade union officials (Bernd Otto was at one stage PA to DGB general secretary *Heinz Oskar* Vetter) they knew that nothing was more important than a small, tightly-knit group of trusties who were kept sweet — and quiet — by cash.

Otto was so successful at appointing himself and his nominees to the management board, the supervisory board and the boards of holding companies and associates that all manner of balance-sheet and financial skulduggery was eventually possible without outsiders ever getting to know — and the accountants gave it all their seal of approval.

Later, when the balloon went up, they changed their minds, but by then it was too late for the shareholders, who had relied on the accountants to keep track of what was going on.

Yet it is only fair to add that not even stricter principles of accountancy and checks and balances would, in all probability, have saved the day.

Until last year the Co-op's balance sheet looked so healthy that hundreds of creditors lent the group hundreds of millions in cash.

Once the crooks were in control, no further skills were needed. Just criminal energy. But there is still a foreseeable end of the road. It is when suppliers aren't paid on time, when cash in hand is barely enough to pay wages. The writing is then on the wall and the end is nigh.

Herr Otto and his partners relied on bolstering the Co-op group and borrowing more and more money. That alone was most impressive.

But in the end there was nothing doing and time ran out.

Herr Friderichs and his bail-out crew thought for too long solely in conventional terms. They were too late in grasping the simple little rules and few — strictly criminal one and all — that Bernd Otto went by.

Günter Buschmann

(Deutsches Allgemeines Sonntagsblatt, Hamburg, 22 September 1989)

Meteorological stations all over the world

Länder und Klima AFRIKA BROCKHAUS · Länder und Klima EUROPA UdSSR BROCKHAUS · Länder und Klima ASIEN AUSTRALIEN BROCKHAUS · Länder und Klima NORD- UND SÜDAMERIKA BROCKHAUS

supplied the data arranged in see-at-a-glance tables in these new reference works. They include details of air and water temperature, precipitation, humidity, sunshine, physical stress of climate, wind conditions and frequency of thunderstorms.

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■ TRANSPORT

Bus timetables 'planned by men for men'

STUTTGARTER ZEITUNG

About 1,400 men and women were asked in Leverkusen what would be needed to make them use public transport preferably or more often.

The survey was commissioned by the North Rhine-Westphalian women's affairs commissioner and carried out by the Darmstadt Housing and Environment Institute.

A frequent answer was that there would have to be better services at night and on Sundays. Many women wanted through bus services so they wouldn't have to change buses. "Bus stops are too dark in the evening," they complained.

The most important finding the survey brought to light was that transport planners are almost all men. They pay little or no attention to the needs of women, who make up the majority of public transport users.

For decades local authorities in the Federal Republic have catered mainly for the Germans' four-wheeled friend, the motor-car.

The number of cars registered at the Driver and Vehicle Licence Centre in Flensburg doubled between 1970 and 1985, whereas the number of bus and tram routes and services has steadily declined.

That has led to an increasing number of households buying a second car as the only way to get the family to and from home, work, kindergarten, school and shopping facilities.

The fewer passengers use public transport, the more services are reduced or withdrawn.

"That set a vicious circle in motion," says Antje Flade of the Darmstadt institute, commenting on transport policy in recent years.

"In situations such as these, public transport is a steadily less feasible alternative and increasingly a mere makeshift."

That doesn't much worry men, more than half of whom drive their own cars, whereas women make up a mere 20 per cent of the increasingly dense volume of motorised traffic.

Having to rely on buses and trains imposes a growing burden on working women with children in particular.

So many services have been reduced to a mere skeleton that they spend endless times waiting for buses, often have to make detours, then miss connections that are, moreover, poorly timed.

They frequently don't reach their destination except by endlessly changing buses and trains and, if they are unlucky, they forfeit invaluable leisure time.

"I work on Sundays and holidays too," one woman wrote on her questionnaire. "I've been complaining about the timetables for three years, but to no effect.

"In the winter I travel to and from work by taxi so as not to spend too much time waiting."

Another female respondent said she had given up travelling by bus altogether. If she went by bus it would take so long that she would only take five minutes longer if she went on foot.

Transport planners' bright ideas can have hair-raising consequences for women with strict working hours. And those who want to send the children to school or to sport or play can only hope they will grow up soon.

"If only there were a bus service that went the whole way I could send the children to training by themselves. As it is, I have to drive them there and back two or three times a week."

Women and old folk overlooked

Women and children are not alone in being disregarded by transport planners. The needs and habits of older people, especially of elderly women who live on their own, are given short shrift too.

Buses and trains usually aren't available on Sundays when many of them make their weekly trip to the cemetery to tend their family graves.

"In many cases cities are run by adults for adults," Bonn Family Affairs Minister Ursula Lehr recently noted.

"The planners don't always bear in mind that children, young people and the aged ought to be able to feel comfortable and at their ease in the city too."

"Cooperation is the need of the hour," says Günter Girau of the Public Transport Association. He means cooperation with passengers.

"There are physical limits to the transport facilities that can be provided in cities," he says, "and the public are gradually beginning to feel the pinch."

Continued on page 13

Aachen conference discusses visual road safety aids

"School has started," motorists are reminded on billboards and hoardings all over Germany at the beginning the school year.

Children as road-users are much more accident-prone than adults, partly because they lack experience and are careless, partly because they are so small that they are often concealed by parked cars.

These at least are the reasons conventionally felt to apply. Douglas Stewart of Aberdeen University, Scotland, has identified an entirely different cause.

Size, he says, is a crucial factor in the motorist's perception and assessment of distance. The smaller a pedestrian looks, the further away he must be.

Motorists may well be misled by children's smaller size, i.e. height, into imagining they are further away than is actually the case and reacting wrongly, i.e. too late.

Stewart was one of 125 specialists at an international conference held in Aachen by the Applied Vision Association and a Cologne study group on motoring, vision and safety.

Psychologists, ophthalmologists and engineers from Germany, Holland, Sweden, France, Britain, the United States and Japan spent four days discussing research projects and findings on seeing and being seen in road traffic.

Ninety per cent of information the motorist needs at the wheel is registered by the eye.

He sees road signs and traffic signals, other vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists and obstacles in the road.

Above all, his vision and speed of perception are of crucial importance in road safety. In accident situations fractions of a second can make all the difference.

Gaining tenths of a second must accordingly be a road safety target. Data must be compiled on the motorist's eye movements and reaction speed.

This can now be done automatically by using devices such as the electro-oculograph or the Aachen helmet, so called because it was devised at Aachen University of Technology.

Exact data provide carmakers and policymakers with important guidelines for fitting out cars and designing and fitting out the roads they use.

Cologne psychologist Walter Schneider said standard European brake lights were unsatisfactory. They took two tenths of a second to warm up before they turned red. French research scientists have experimented with a variety of brake lighting systems. They say a dual system consisting of a red and an amber, or orange, light is preferable.

The orange light is lit as soon as the driver takes his foot off the accelerator, thereby improving the reaction time of the motorist behind.

Another solution to this problem has been patented in the United States. Brake lights are kept warm by a constant supply of low-tension current to gain the all-important fraction of a second that is lost when a cold light is switched on.

Professor Schneider was critical of the German habit of using dipped headlights only at dusk and in the dark. In Sweden dipped headlights have been mandatory in daytime too for several years. Holland is to follow suit next year.

In Sweden the number of accidents involving a collision with an oncoming vehicle is said to have declined by 10 per cent since motorists have been required to switch their headlights on in the daytime.

Swedish carmakers have also included aspherical "cambered" wing-mirrors as a standard fitting, whereas German carmakers still have reservations. Frankfurt ophthalmologist Walter Bockelmann told the Aachen conference how this wing-mirror eliminated the "dead angle," the part of the road behind you that you can't see in an ordinary wing-mirror, entirely.

What you see looks much smaller than the usual wing-mirror view, however, so it takes a little time to get used to.

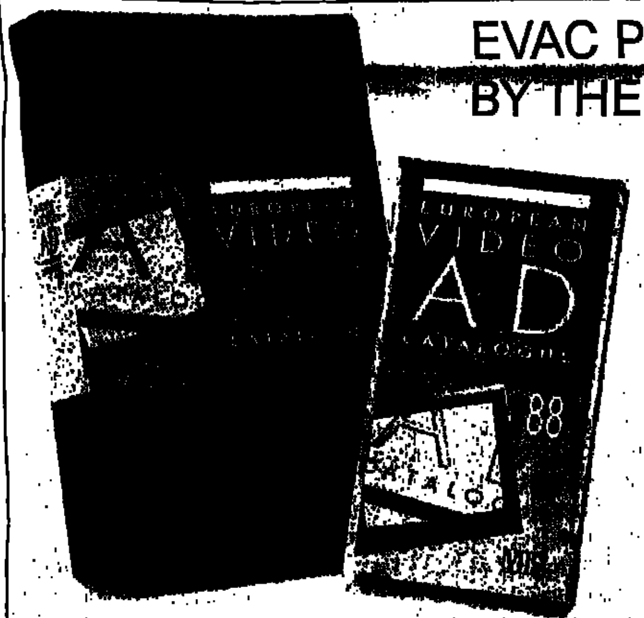
Another new idea that would take some time to get used to would be the use of green rather than red as a warning colour on a white background.

Yet a number of experiments carried out by Aachen psychologists and road construction engineers indicate that green and white, as used in Switzerland, are much more readily visible.

Especially in the dark, red and white road signs have been shown to be much more poorly visible than green and white signs.

Motorists with normal vision are usually chosen for these and many other experiments dealing with vision in traffic. But they cannot be taken as the yardstick for real, everyday traffic situ-

Continued on page 12



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■ THE ARTS

Lifetime impulses, lurking death at film festival



A boy runs for his life through ancient alleyways, across fields and along empty coastal roads.

Mimi is taking part in a long-distance race, despite threats by his father because it is the only way to convince him that he has athletic talents.

A complicated yet plausible double movement: Mimi flees from his father in order to be able to rush towards him with the news of victory.

Luigi Comencini's film, *A Boy from Calabria*, was one of the outstanding impressions during the International Children's Film Festival in Frankfurt's Deutsches Filmmuseum, where there were a host of entries worth seeing.

Like all the better children's films Comencini's *oeuvre* is also intended for adults. In the long haul and fresh beginnings of youth the 73-year-old director concentrates the impulses of an entire lifetime.

In barren Calabria there is no abundance, not even of words. Comencini lets his pictures do the talking.

It is not by chance that the Italian director presents the region in springtime green: the seeds of hope indicate that the boy will win through in the end.

A limping bus driver trains the boy in the hope that he will achieve the success he was unable to achieve himself.

It is grotesque how the boy's father tries to eliminate this intervention in his authority. He exchanges the only cow the family owns for a small old Fiat in order to overtake and cut the shaky bus.

The camera follows the bizarre chase impartially from above, the reconciliation of the two contrasting drivers and mentors is inevitable.

In passing yet precisely Comencini observes social conditions, the gap between a small and prosperous upper class and the landless or the patriarchic demands of the head of the family, a ruler without land who has at least absolute rule in his humble shack.

And yet the film moves beyond the immediacy of the southern Italian context, especially over the boy's search for his own development. It is the drama of growing up, exemplified with reference to a particularly drastic story.

By way of contrast to Comencini, who was able to make a name for himself during a previous Children's Film Festival in Frankfurt with *Schoolfriends*, the director Talgat Temenov from Kazakhstan is a newcomer to Germany.

Whereas Comencini's unerring and needle-sharp observations are easy enough to decipher the allegorical sequences in Temenov's film often remain a mystery for western eyes.

Der kleine Wolf unter Menschen takes us to a remote village in the director's inhospitable native region.

In complementary series of observation the film is a variation on a familiar theme in a more exotic background: the fight against evil.

In this film it is the orphan boy Samat who is faced by this task. Samat finds a wolf-cub and looks after it in the hope that he will be able to tame it.

A scheming hunter and dealer turns up and kills the animal so as to sell it to a taxidermist.

Before Samat's experiment with the wolf's awakening nature is given a chance to fall or succeed his plans are thus thwarted unexpectedly by human maliciousness.

There are parallel cuts to the example of the wolf in the conflicts which develop within the boy's clique.

Samat tries to force the leader of the youngsters, a thief, to hand back a stolen knife.

He is soon obliged to accept that he has nothing on his side but from the feeling of being right.

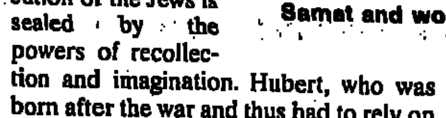
His best friends soon abandon him, since the balance of power is all too obvious.The only person who stands by him is the village idiot.

Two completely different outsiders, one a rebel the other handicapped, are pushed into suffering and loneliness.

Temenov defies the pessimistic outcome of his exemplary village story by presenting alluringly beautiful detailed and long shots of the unspoilt mountain landscape.

Temenov, who personally attended the festival in Frankfurt, emphasised that a great deal is already won by pointing out that evil is not only limited to the others, the enemies, as propagated in his country for many years.

He said that the time is ripe for a film about the war in Afghanistan. The courageous man from Kazakhstan, whose parable was quite rightly awarded a "Lucas", intends making one. The subject of children in the second world war was not only dealt with in a critical retrospective, which included *inter alia* Louis Malle's *Auf Wiedersehen, Kinder*, but also in some of this year's festival entries. Jean-Loup Hubert's new French film *Après la guerre*, however, is no match for Malle's masterpiece. In Malle's film every take, every ritual in the Catholic refuge and every horrific second of the persecution of the Jews is sealed by the powers of recollection and imagination. Hubert, who was born after the war and thus had to rely on his own imagination, let himself be carried away into producing a melodrama which is overpoweringly mixed with situation comedy and appeals for brotherliness. A German deserter, who manages to escape with the help of two French boys, finally surrenders voluntarily to the advancing American troops in order to atone for the guilt of his compatriots.



Samat and wolf . . . support from the village idiot. (Photo: Film Museum Frankfurt)

Although Hubert (as in his film *Am grossen Weg*) does appeal to the reactions of a child he flees from the sad story into speculative spectacle.

The jury, with its equal representation of film experts and children, was divided on this film: the juniors alone felt that *Après la guerre* deserved a "Lucas."

From a perspective which is suppressed in Germany Jenny Bowen's film *The Wizard of Loneliness* takes a look at the 40s through the eyes of an American boy whose life changes abruptly after his father enlists in the army to fight at the front.

The 12-year-old boy, who has to move to live with his grandparents, only realises gradually that more is at stake than just his home. Suddenly he sees death lurking behind every newspaper headline.

He senses how the sleepy little town is dragged into the whirlpool of the bloody events taking place on the foreign continent. With composure and suggestively the director makes the audience appreciate just what her protagonist is going through.

The English director Colin Finbow turned a problematic subject into a comedy.

Hard Road, a witty story about two runaways, was unanimously awarded a "Lucas" in Frankfurt.

From the screenplay draft to the final take Finbow shaped the film together with adolescents from the Children's Film Unit in London.

Fleeing from their parents and searching for themselves two teenagers cannot avoid grotesquely imitating the life style of adults.

In red luxury limousine from his father's factory, which he is allowed to clean every day but not drive, the unloved son of an upper class family heads down to the popular seaside resort Brighton in the company of an overprotected daughter of a lower middle-class family.

Only after some hesitation do the two "fugitives" dare to depart from the route of official attractions and move off the beaten track. Although the film takes the family conflicts and the statements of the protagonists seriously it also makes a parody of the clumsy helpers, the psychiatrist and the good Samaritan phone service.

Typical set genre pieces from romances, gangster and James Bond films ironically paraphrase the experiences of the two runaways. *Hard Road* combines psychodrama, illusion and satire.

This balance of earnestness and wit is also achieved by the Canadian director Paul Donovan in the film *George's Island*.

The comedian Sheila McCarthy (the leading actress in Patricia Rozema's *I've Heard the Mermaids Singing*) plays a key role as the extremely strict teacher who tries to obtain a forced adoption for one of her pupils, but who is finally brought back to her senses by a sailor's yarn.

The spirits of pirates of yore checkmate modern bureaucrats. With an understanding of art and satirical zest Donovan successfully opens up the tried and tested treasure chest of adventure stories.

Eva-Maria Lenz

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 21 September 1989)


Doesn't want a career at all costs . . . Ute Lemper. (Photo: dpa)

A leggy star comes back down to earth

The new German *Wunder-Fräulein* or "Not only her legs are the greatest since Marlene." Just some of the headlines which hailed musical star Ute Lemper two years ago as the new young hope of German show business.

Looking back at the time after her fantastic "Cabaret" successes in Paris and her tour of Germany in 1987/1988 would she do the same again?

"Definitely not such a big tour. I probably wasn't ready for that, I can't stand in front of a huge audience of 10,000 people and act as if I've got a great message to convey. The show wanted too much, I shall not do anything like that again," says Lemper.

There is a good side to the lack of fuss in the media at the moment:

"I am now free not to please everybody. At that time everyone was interested in me. Above all, I do not want to be commercial, but I want to do what I enjoy."

Lemper, who speaks French and English fluently, feels equally at ease in Britain, France or the USA.

Her Kurt Weill evenings this summer went down very well with the London press. Shortly afterwards she starred in a BBC show in Liverpool singing Burt Bacharach songs.

At the beginning of October the film *L'Autriche* by director Pierre Granier Defairre has its premiere in Paris. It presents a completely different Lemper, who plays Empress Marie Antoinette, and shows how she experienced the final three days before her execution.

Musically, Lemper made a worldwide comeback this week with a new LP.

For the first time she does not sing the better known musical songs, but songs composed especially for her by US songwriters and recorded in Los Angeles.

"It is a jazzy, relaxed and very individual record," says Lemper.

For the longer-term record cycle with music by Kurt Weill she will be recording *Die sieben Todsünden* in Berlin in a few weeks time and hopes to present these songs at the Düsseldorf Schauspielhaus in March next year.

Guest performances are planned this autumn in Brazil and tours through Japan and Australia.

Lemper stresses: "I have become more uncompromising and my taste has become clearer. I do not want a career at all costs, but I want to do things I enjoy. And I don't trust anybody but decide myself."

Frank Heidmann

(Rheinische Post, Düsseldorf, 16 September 1989)

■ EDUCATION

Bilingual project aims to help foreign children through cultural log jam

Birol is six years old, comes from Turkey and is unable to speak a word of German.

In line with the German Schools Act he is not allowed to attend normal elementary school classes before first attending a special class for foreigners first.

The preparatory classes are aimed at giving the child a knowledge of German and help it integrate into the German schools system.

O-m-a stands for *Oma* (grandma). The teacher shows Birol a picture of an old lady with glasses and a knot in her hair while pronouncing the word — and he assumes that the word and the woman belong together.

After a while he can copy the word written on the blackboard. This is *Oma*.

But can Birol really acquire a proper knowledge of German this way? What does a knowledge of (the German) language mean?

Anyone who feels that language is nothing more than a set of symbols and speaking is no more than a process of information will probably be satisfied with the way Birol learns German.

Linguistic philosophy and linguistic pragmatics, however, have long since discovered that language is much more than just a system of grammatical and lexical rules.

Someone who says something does not merely make an assertion, but may also be making a decision, a recommendation or a promise, issuing a warning and expressing their feelings.

A language contains collective experiences, expectations and value judgements, all of which are closely linked with social, political and historical parameters.

Are the same experiences associated with the German *Oma* and the Turkish grandmother, the *nine*? What feelings are aroused inside a Turkish child when it thinks of its *nine*, who has a specific role within the family?

These are unlikely to be the same feelings a German child associates with its *Oma*, who lives in a different house or even a different town, perhaps in an old people's home.

The conventional preparatory class does not build a linguistic bridge between these (child) worlds.

Turkish pupils in Germany are confronted by a twofold problem: they neither learn the German language properly nor have the opportunity to use their own language, the language in which they could express their experiences, their questions and their emotions.

The German language and the world it depicts remains a strange world. Turkish children undergo a growing self-estrangement, since they do not learn how to talk about what makes them happy or sad.

Integration in German schools, therefore, is made more difficult rather than helped.

In many cases the result is superficial conformity to the strange German world, which is often characterised by rejection and aggression.

This in turn frequently leads to an even greater withdrawal into their own world by the foreign children and a tendency to abide even more rigidly by the rules laid down by their families and their religion. The children emotionally reject the other world, the strange world.

After a few months at school, for example, Birol writes in his exercise book in perfect German: "My name is Birol and I come from Turkey. I cannot speak German."

A pilot project in intercultural education in elementary schools successfully tested in Berlin during the past few years hopes to find a way out of this dilemma. Its key underlying concept is "coordinated" bilingual education.

"Coordinated and bilingual," Monika Nehr, one of the project's educational advisers, explains, "means that both languages, Turkish and German, are taught simultaneously and in an interlinked way right from the start.

"This simultaneous bilingual literacy programme enables children to become aware of what both languages have or do not have in common and helps them use the languages accordingly."

The aim is not to produce a kind of "naive bilingualism", in which the content of one language is simply translated into another; this would reduce linguistic proficiency to the ability to produce walking dictionaries.

Bilingualism is more than just the sum of the command of two different languages, more than just two times monolingualism.

The full meaning of a word or a statement can only become clear within the context in which it is uttered.

The coordinated bilingual education approach, therefore, concentrates on the life-worlds of the girls and boys concerned.

Strictly speaking, foreign children do not live in one world but in several: on the one hand, their experiences in Ger-

Frankfurter Rundschau

many; on the other, the experiences they associate with the native countries of their parents and its traditions.

This results in a variety of experiences, which can resemble but which often contradict one another.

The word *nine*, for example, is not simply translated as *Oma*. As Monika Nehr points out: "The aim cannot be to learn a family term, but to designate and describe a variety of experiences which children associate with old women — for example, in Berlin-Kreuzberg — most of whom live alone or in visibly poor conditions: old women who drink, old women who always shout at the children, especially Turkish children, or old women who are kind to children."

Turkish children associated a host of such experiences with the German word *Oma*.

Turkish children are unlikely to associate the word *Oma* with their own *nine*, since the Turkish grandmother assumes a different role in the Turkish family — even if it lives in Germany.

She looks after the grandchildren, helps do the household chores, helps her own children, the mothers of the schoolchildren, and supports the family financially as long as she can keep on working.

The varying tasks create close ties between the children and their grandmothers, which are marked by a variety of experiences, expectations and emotions.

Monika Nehr knows through her own teaching experience that the children could never describe these experiences in German.

"These experiences are emotional and so extensive. If a German teacher asks the pupils to describe them in German the children would only be able to articulate a fraction of the information.

"This is one reason why we favour coordinated bilingualism; as a rule Turkish teachers are also present during German reading lessons, who can then carry on the discussion in Turkish if they feel that the children want to say more about a certain word but are unable to do so in German."

Coordinated bilingual education does not simply create a juxtaposition of German and Turkish words, differing meanings, contradictory experiences and divergent life-worlds, but seeks to discuss and communicate their content.

After the children have described their terrible experiences with *Omas* the class talks about how the children could try and find out more about these old ladies during the next lesson.

The Turkish children in particular are fascinated by this approach, and questions are then developed on the subject. In German, of course, as the topic is the German *Oma*.

The Turkish children then have a clear motivation for learning the German questions off by heart, since this is a phase of the literacy programme during which the children are not yet able to read or write these questions.

Together with a teacher and a tape-recorder, the children then go outside the school and ask old ladies the questions they have listed: Do you live alone? Where are your children? What do you live on? Have you got money?

It is surprising how happy the women generally are to answer these questions.

The children's native language, in this case Turkish, is not just a vehicle for learning the German language.

It enables the children to express their anxious and inquisitive feelings. The questions they develop in their mother tongue and then translate into German result from a real need.

Other topics are discussed along the same lines, for example, the relationship between the children and animals.

Many Turkish families come from rural areas in Turkey, where all animals only have the function of a working animal.

The contrasting experiences of the agrarian Turkish society and the urban industrial life-style become particularly clear in the discussion on dogs.

According to the Islamic religion dogs are impure and are not allowed to live in the same house as human beings.

Dogs only have the function of serving their owners, for example, to help them when they go hunting, to protect them against wolves or to guard the sheep or cows.

Turkish children, therefore, often find it difficult to accept the idea of keeping a dog as a pet. They are afraid of animals which roam around the streets, afraid to go to the playground and often hide at home.

Another topic is what the parents do for a living and how the father behaves, for example, when he comes home from the night shift.

He is often irritable, moody and only wants to sleep, something which is a problem in the cramped living conditions.

If the children are too loud he gives them money to go to the cinema or even hits them and chases them out of the house so that he can have his peace and quiet.

The children have to cope with all these problems in a foreign country and an unfamiliar environment. To do so they need their own language.

They realise that they are not alone with all their questions and fears and that someone listens to them.

At the same time they learn the German language in order to get to know the interests, feelings and difficulties of German adults and children with the help of interviews and discussions.

Despite all the dissimilarity they learn to appreciate that they have a great deal in common with German children.

This teaching situation strengthens their self-confidence. On this basis they then have the courage and the ego strength to face up to a strange life-world more open-mindedly.

Monika Neumann, who teaches a class with Turkish and German children together with her Turkish colleague, Ergin Bentürk, and takes part in the coordinated bilingual education project, confirms that it has a positive effect on the development of the child's self-esteem:

"For me there was a key situation for the self-confidence of the Turkish children, which exists here and which at all enables a sense of partnership with the German children.

"One day a little Turkish girl by the name of Özlem sat in the class with dreamy eyes and said out loud: 'German children can sing well, Frau Neumann.'

"I asked her: 'Why do you say that, Özlem?' Özlem answered: 'Well, I always thought only Turkish children can sing well. But German children can also sing well.'

"In my opinion this is an example of a situation in which a child says I have a Turkish identity and I am really surprised that others can do something just as good as I can."

Coordinated bilingual education can look back on more than just its own experiences during recent years.

It owes a great deal to the internationally famous Brazilian educationalist, Paolo Freire.

His pedagogy is devoted to the oppressed rural population, which can neither read nor write and which is unaware of its cultural and social roots. In this context Freire refers to a "negative culture of silence."

He sets dialogue against intentional or unintentional oppression. In dialogue all partners are equal.

The everyday culture of the learning person is accepted by the teaching person and becomes the subject of teaching or linguistic instruction.

The main aspect is the recognition of the personality of the others, their cultural and social identity.

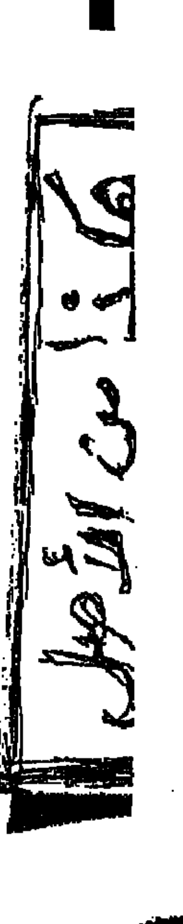
In political terms the key feature is the decision for a democratic society.

In practice this decision often requires tremendous courage, not only in far-off Brazil.

Courage means taking up the cause of another person in a concrete situation, publicly siding with outsiders, with a minority.

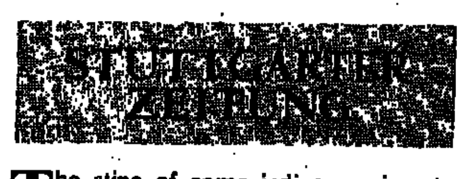
Hannegret Biesenbaum

(Frankfurter Rundschau, 21 September 1989)



■ RESEARCH

Berlin zoologist compares lifestyles of the hornet and the bumble bee



The sting of some indigenous insects can be an extremely effective weapon.

People unlucky enough to step on a bumble-bees' nest or swallow a wasp that has settled on their glass of lemonade tend to wreak vengeance with fire and poison.

Persistent horror stories are told about the hornet, the largest insect in this category that occurs in Germany.

Three hornet stings are popularly said to be enough to kill a man and seven enough to kill a horse.

Recent scientific research has revealed that such panic-stricken fear of the poison in the insects' sting is unwarranted.

People may on occasion have suffered more damage than mere pain and swellings, but they will usually have been the result of allergic responses.

Berlin zoologist Helmar Kulike has proved in tests on laboratory animals that over 1,000 hornets would need to sting a human simultaneously to seriously endanger an adult.

This, of course, is a strictly theoretical figure, especially as the population of hornets' nests never exceeds treble figures.

In a Free University PhD thesis entitled "On the Biology of the Hornet" Kulike takes a closer look at some of the hornets' strategies in their daily fight for survival and has found fresh explanations to account for the fact that honey-bees die after using their stings, whereas wasps or hornets don't.

The sting can look back on a long evolutionary development. It began as a drill to drill holes into which eggs were laid, which is why drones don't have them.

It did not develop into a hunting or self-defence device until a much later stage in the insect's development.

Wasps can retract their sting after use, stinging a victim several times to administer as much poison as possible.

Worker bees' stings stick in the victim, are torn off the bee's body and automatically pump their entire poison content into the wound.

The bee then dies, but not as a punishment for the pain it inflicts, as popular lore would have it. And despite the fact that modern scientific literature still says so, it isn't true that hornets' stings don't have barbs. The simple fact that evolution has of necessity taken into account is that worker bees are expendable because there are thousands of them in every hive, whereas hornets seldom number more than a few hundred.

So bees can afford to sacrifice a fair number of their kind to protect the hive and the queen, always assuming that the aggressor is taught a lesson.

Hornets can't afford this wastage. They only have between the end of May and the end of September in which to bring up their young for the next season.

The queen hornet, unlike the queen bee, spends much of the year outside the nest. She must be able to defend herself effectively without suffering irreparable damage.

The queen is the only hornet to survive the winter. She builds the first combs herself and brings up the new season's first worker hornets.

For safety's sake the hornet's sting cannot stay in the victim for longer than a fraction of a second, in which as much poison as possible must be sprayed into the wound.

The hornet has powerful muscles that pump the poison through the sting. "Self-defence with as few losses as possible" is the motto.

This strategy is complemented by the black and yellow warning stripes on the hornet's back. Their purpose is to teach intruders a lesson and remind them to keep out — or clear out — in future.

The queen bee in contrast cannot defend herself. So there have to be differences in body structure between the queen and worker bees.

Once this complex distinction has been incorporated in nature's plan, it is developed and put to further use. Worker bees have stronger jaws and "pockets" on their legs in which they store the pollen they collect, for instance.

Such fundamental anatomical distinctions as these do not exist among wasps and hornets.

Another strategy that bees adopt in order to survive is their habit of setting out in swarms to find a new home.

The queen bee leaves the old nest or hive to her young and flies off with part of the swarm to relocate. Hornets do something similar, but are less organised and can, as a result, fail in the attempt.

When a hornets' nest proves too small because, say, it was built in a bird's nesting box for lack of a suitable hollow in a tree, worker hornets can find a new home and build new combs.

But the queen's flight can prove a fiasco. The queen bee only sets out accompanied by her entire swarm, with scout bees "dancing" to show the others the way. The queen hornet has to find her own way — and often fails.

When this happens, another survival programme swings into action. A group of worker hornets suddenly start to lay eggs. But they can only hatch as males.

What is more, fertility and housing construction are poorly coordinated. Two eggs may be laid in one comb or larvae that are not yet fully grown may be cleared away.

Kulike sees this behaviour as a vestige of a "more variable procreation strategy" such as survives to this day among tropical wasps.

In the tropics young queen wasps are constantly brought up and kept on standby, as it were, to mate with the male offspring of worker wasps if the queen dies — and so ensure the colony's survival. The Cape honey-bee is, in contrast, the only bee to have developed to the stage at which it can produce workers and even queens from unfertilised eggs.

Hornets usually steer clear of humans, showing keener interest in fruit tarts and lemonade, much as wasps do. Yet their nests are still regularly smoked out.

They have been listed as a protected species for some years and play an important ecological role. Like songbirds, they eat other insects and their larvae, catching them to feed their young.

As they hunt both day and night, they hunt at the same time as bats, which eat hornets in their turn.

Hornets could well be bred for use in biological pest control. Similar experiments with wasps in China have proved most successful.

Kulike's advice in dealing with hornets is simple. Treat them just as you would bees or drones. Don't hit out at a hornet when it flies past. If need be, hornets' nests can be relocated. But that is best left to the fire brigade or to experienced conservationists.

Peter Becker

(Stuttgarter Zeitung, 25 September 1989)

Spy in the hive imitates bees' foraging dance

Forty years ago Karl von Frisch decoded the "language" of bees, the dance of the foraging bee by which workers tell each other where pollen lies waiting to be collected. This discovery earned him the Nobel Prize.

American scientists have spent years trying in vain to develop a robot bee that imitates the dance figures to the satisfaction of other bees.

Professor Martin Lindauer and his staff at Würzburg University, in collaboration with bioacoustics specialist Professor Axel Michelsen of Odense University, have now designed a robot bee that is accepted by the inmates of a hive.

Its robot dancing is computerised, as is a scraping noise that real bees make.

This and remote-controlled handouts of nectar samples are often enough to persuade honey-bees to head for artificial feeding locations.

Research scientists hope this electronic spy will help them to learn more about a mode of communication that is unique in the animal kingdom.

Despite surprising initial successes Professor Michelsen feels it will be another 10 years before a robot dancer bee that can hold its own in a hive is perfected.

(Bremer Nachrichten, 23 September 1989)

Aachen road safety conference

Continued from page 9

ations. Wearing glasses of any kind reduces the speed of motorists' (and everyone else's) perception by between 0.2 and 0.5 seconds in the dark, but drivers may have to take split-second decisions.

What is more, all motorists over 50 have age-related poorer vision, and one motorist in three will be over 50 in the foreseeable future, or so statisticians say.

Besides, the older you are, the slower your reactions become, and that is true of all road-users, but motorists, not pedestrians, are the potential killers.

Road safety calls for technical improvements to offset such human shortcomings, especially what can be life-or-death shortfalls in vision.

Rita Mielke

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 23 September 1989)

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■ RESEARCH

Genetic engineering bill pleases almost no-one

The Bundesrat, or Upper House of the Bonn Bundestag, has refused to debate in detail the Federal Health Ministry's Genetic Engineering Bill. The Bundesrat, representing the 11 *Länder*, or Federal states, submitted a draft of its own after spokesmen for all parties argued that the Bill was inadequate. A record 253 amendments had been tabled by the committee stage.

"Allow me to congratulate you," writes a doctor to the prospective parents in a *Brave New World* scenario. "It will be a boy this time, with the blue eyes you wanted.

"One small drawback. His IQ will probably not be all that high, but in view of the excellent overall quality we advise you to have the embryo cloned."

The doctor goes on to tell the parents-to-be in rapturous terms how useful a "carbon copy" of the child they had ordered might be.

It could serve as a replacement should the first embryo fail to survive transfer into the mother's womb. It could serve as a younger twin. It could be a "transplantation reservoir" for their à la carte son.

This tale is pure fiction, but it is told by someone who knows what he is talking about. The writer, Jacques Testart, was the doctor in charge of what became France's first test-tube baby.

In his book, published in Germany as *Das transparente Ei* (The Transparent Ovum), he settles accounts with his profession.

Dr Testart is not involved in this sort of work any longer because he doesn't want to be held partly to blame for having developed an inhuman discipline of reproductive medicine.

In the Federal Republic of Germany about 15 per cent of couples cannot have children, and their number is on the increase. Since 1978 doctors have been trying to help childless couples by means of test-tube babies.

But as it involves observation, supervision, control and manipulation — or at least the possibility — in the early stages of pregnancy, the technique poses a plethora of ethical and legal problems.

Bills have been submitted to the Bundesrat by both the Justice Ministry and the Health Ministry.

Both drafts have been roundly condemned by spokesmen for all parties, with the Health Ministry's Genetic Engineering Bill breaking all records in the Upper House's 40-year history.

An unprecedented 253 amendments totalling 349 printed pages were tabled, with the almost inevitable result that the Bill was sent back to the Ministry to be redrafted.

In view of the years that have been spent debating the revolution in human reproduction, the Protection of the Embryo Bill tabled by the Justice Ministry can at best be said to reflect peripheral problems.

"The Bill is a total fiasco. It fails to solve fundamental issues," says Gerhard Malborg, who served for 12 months on the Federal and *Land* governments' working party on reproductive medicine before being appointed PA to the Justice Minister of the Rhineland-Palatinate.

"It is non-committal where legal provisions are needed and regulates what are still not even remote possibilities."

The Bill bans artificial tampering with human genes, cloning of embryos and the creation of humanoid hybrids — as though an invasion by monsters were imminent. But it fails to answer questions that have awaited an answer for decades as medical advances have taken their course.

Unlike 218 of the Criminal Code, which deals with abortion, the Bill makes no provision for circumstances in which test-tube babies are to be legally permitted.

Nearly 100 institutes in the Federal Republic offer test-tube baby facilities. Until cost-cutting legislation came into force this year, test-tube babies were available on the health insurance even though the technique has only a 10-per-cent success rate.

It remains to be seen whether it will be reinstated as a measure for which health insurance schemes make provision. It is certainly expensive, costing DM40,000 on average.

"Are only the rich to have children?" is an argument in its favour. Unfortunately, it is fielded mainly by people who earn a living from biotech.

A number of fertility experts have now admitted to having cooked the books to begin with in order to persuade more women to give the test-tube technique a try.

The Justice Ministry's Bill makes no mention whatever of a much older problem: artificial insemination by donor.

At least 1,000 children a year are born in the Federal Republic as a result of AID, and no-one dares to imagine how many half-brothers and half-sisters know nothing of each other's existence.

In Munich, for instance, 100 selected medical students are sperm donors at Grosshadern Hospital. Twenty of them are "regulars." A number of private institutes use "sperm cocktails."

The debate on surrogate mothers has totally upstaged the debate about surrogate fathers. Yet does the child have a right to know who its father is?

Ought the genetical father's data to be stored? How is the pre-selection to be prevented that would inevitably occur if donors were to be chosen on the basis of intelligence and appearance? Can the donor be required to pay maintenance?

Some of these questions have been half-answered by the Federal Constitutional Court. Others haven't. To steer clear of conflicts and respect the ethical views of the Roman Catholic Church, Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg are planning to make sperm donation an offence for which fines may be imposed.

The two states' experts in the joint working party had adopted a much less rigorous approach, fuelling hopes that agreement might be reached on uniform countrywide provisions.

Free Democrat Peter Caesar, Justice Minister of the Rhineland-Palatinate, could now well be the only supporter of the original joint concept, which was that sperm donation was not to be made an offence but subjected to strict regulation.

Nurses, orderlies and semi-skilled staff are now running sperm banks and handling orders placed by women's groups. Herr Caesar feels something must be done about this state of affairs.

What he has in mind is making artificial insemination legal only when it is carried out by a qualified doctor after a proper examination.

Sperm donors are only to be allowed to donate sperm once. Children are to be entitled to learn who their fathers are.

Husbands are not to be entitled to dispute paternity once they have consented to artificial insemination.

Herr Caesar recalls with regret the "amazingly liberal" draft submitted by the Rhineland-Palatinate back in 1986 when the state had a CDU government (as opposed to the present CDU-FDP coalition).

"How can I make the creation of life an indictable offence?" he asks. He has encountered misgivings in all parties, including his own, and feels the "misgivers" draw tenuous distinctions, if any, and tend to take cover behind generalisations.

Inability to arrive at a compromise rules out a uniform countrywide provision. The *Länder* will make use of their constitutional right to make their respective health provisions. Tourism — of a kind — will be the inevitable consequence.

A Bavarian woman in need of artificial insemination by donor will have to travel to Hamburg, say, for treatment. As a true blue Bavarian she may, to make even more of an ass of the law, take a true blue Bavarian donor with her.

Bavaria, Baden-Württemberg and, in principle, Hesse still advocate a hard line, while Hamburg and North Rhine-Westphalia are more relaxed.

But the borderlines cannot simply be marked on a map. The Federal Justice Ministry, for instance, is at odds with the Federal Health Ministry.

The Health Ministry would like to classify more activities as criminal offences; the Justice Ministry would prefer not to do so.

Only the naive will be surprised to hear that CDU/CSU conservatives are agreed, on this point, with most Greens.

Free Democratic legal expert Detlef Kleinert even goes so far as to suggest the existence of an "unholy alliance of Catholic social teachings and feminism."

The front line certainly runs right through all parties. Women members of all parliamentary parties are aware of what psychologists and psychotherapists often call a pathological desire to have children.

Testing tube

The Protection of the Embryo Bill submitted to the Bundesrat can look back on a long and chequered career.

It proves, if anything, that politicians are unable to keep abreast of the breathtaking pace of scientific research.

Early in 1984 the Federal Justice and Research Ministries set up a joint working party, the Benda Commission. It was followed by a Bundestag commission of inquiry.

Both were set up to look into problems concerning genetic engineering and reproductive medicine, bearing in mind that test-tube babies were a step in the direction of genetic manipulation.

Annual conferences of the medical profession, 1985, and the legal profession, 1986, approved guidelines and made recommendations.

The *Länder*, or Federal states, which are in charge of health provisions, drew up plans of their own.

They dealt only with reproductive medicine. The chemical industry had lobbied for this issue to be dealt with separately from genetic engineering.

When the Federal Justice Ministry published a draft for discussion in 1986, the Justice Ministry of the Rhineland-Palatinate followed suit, as did Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg.

Lower Saxony's aim is to authorise the Federal government to make uniform provisions in order to rule out "reproductive tourism."

This slogan means different legal provisions forcing people to travel from one part of the country to another for medical treatment that is banned where they happen to live.

In 1987 the Federal Health Ministry was awarded sole responsibility for genetic engineering and human genetics.

When the joint Federal and state government working party on reproductive medicine presented its final report in 1988 it was able to base its findings on over a dozen documents and drafts.

Experts agree that the Federal Justice Ministry's present draft is a mere "rump Bill."

This is not the view generally held by gynaecologists, who see female infertility as a complaint that ought to be covered by health insurance provisions.

Yet when Professor Kurt Semm, the German test-tube baby pioneer, was asked why sterility was classified as a complaint, he let the cat out of the bag, saying:

"Because otherwise the insurance wouldn't pay for the treatment."

German politicians look, with a mixture of irritation and fascination, at how these problems are handled in other countries. They feel the Ministerial proposals are too restrictive,

Private clinics in Britain, for instance, only accept women patients who agree to donate an embryo of their own for research purposes.

In a number of European countries pre-natal diagnosis is to be used to select the baby-to-be's sex — as in the Far East.

As in India and China, male embryos will stand a better chance of survival.

Marianne Quoirin

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, Cologne, 22 September 1989)

Continued from page 9

Safety has long been an aspect of the public transport debate. Many people, women in particular, are worried about travelling in the dark.

Right they are! Rape, sexual harrassment and even murder are crimes of violence of which they alone are the victims.

In about 30 German cities special night taxi services for women have been introduced, and in some cases discontinued for lack of interest.

Other cities are experimenting with collective taxis and call buses. Collective taxis carry several passengers and drop them at various points along the route. Call buses serve a regular route at prearranged intervals.

Depending on demand, i.e. phone calls, the bus driver makes detours to pick callers up. His schedule leaves him ample time in which to make them.

Call buses are being tested in several cities, such as Pforzheim. An experimental system in West Berlin is an intriguing idea. A call bus ticket costs three marks and can be used five times a month by season ticket-holders.

Monica Weber-Nau

(Stuttgarter Zeitung, 23 September 1989)

■ WELFARE

Women bear the brunt of care for the aged

The number of old people is increasing. Caring for them at home is becoming a bigger problem. Many relatives who go out to work are finding it more difficult to look after their father or mother-in-law. Ulrich Kettler, a sociologist, outlines the possibilities and limitations of local welfare services for the elderly.

Frau B. is a 42-year-old married woman with two children. Three years ago her father-in-law, who is now 71, had a stroke and has been in need of care ever since. He is permanently in a wheelchair, unable to go out of the house and hardly able to speak.

He was forced to break up his household and live with his children. Since then Frau B. has been looking after him old man — in addition to running her own household and bringing up her children.

She finds it a strain, but she does not want to send him to a home. Is this the reality of domestic care? Or is it an isolated case?

For years the growing proportion of old people in society has been predicted. This goes hand in hand with an increase in the number of old people needing care and nursing.

The number of old people is expected to double by the year 2000. The money needed to take care of them is not.

Time is pressing. What can be done? A place in a home costs up to DM4,000 a month. Yet the situation in old people's and nursing homes is not only being criticised because of the tremendous costs.

There is a demand for more humane solutions. One of the mottos for the future is "more out-patient instead of in-patient."

Domestic care by relatives should be financially supported and extended. The old people's home should be the very last link in the chain of care options.

Those who advocate these solutions, however, often forget to mention what this means for those who generally bear the brunt of the care burden: women.

Roughly 80 per cent of domestic care is carried out by daughters, daughters-in-law or wives. Apart from their care and household commitments about 20 per cent go out to work and have children of their own to look after.

This double burden leads to psychological problems. Social conflicts also occur frequently in these families, but are rarely noticed outside.

Help is always needed for the relatives concerned if:

- medical treatment is required,
- it is no longer possible to guarantee personal hygiene,
- they have been unable to take a holiday for years because of their care commitments,
- psychological crisis and conflict situations occur, and
- a double burden (job and children) exists alongside care.

How can the care system for the elderly be extended to provide relief for the families affected?

For several years now a pilot project entitled "Out-patient Services for Persons in need of care" has been carried out throughout the country on behalf of the Bonn Ministry for Youth, Family Affairs, Women's Affairs and Health.

In nine *Länder* from Schleswig-Holstein to Bavaria 16 welfare centres *(Sozialstationen)* have been given funds for two additional members of staff each and 10 persons doing community service (the alternative to compulsory military service for conscientious objectors). At the same time four partly in-patient institutions were set up.

The Münster region in North Rhine-Westphalia is the focal point of the federal project. Three welfare centres and one short-term care institution are involved.

All nine welfare centres in the Münster region have been given an additional DM80,000 per annum each in local funds.

Altogether, the number of care-for-the-elderly services has doubled.

The project has been accompanied by scientific surveys which also include old people's and nursing homes, hospitals, and psychiatric day care institutions.

Before this model programme care for the elderly in Münster was the same as in other local communities.

The federal model and the participation of local communities and welfare associations has brought about substantial changes.

The welfare centres look after sick people, take care of the elderly and help families in need.

The Münster welfare centres help over 700 persons a month; this corresponds to 15-20 per cent of all persons in need of care living with their families.

The overall survey showed that 65 per cent of the patients visited by welfare centre workers are taken care of by relatives or friends.

A requirement for domestic care is the employment of the relatives. Without this the welfare centres are often no longer able to provide their services and the person in question has to be sent to hospital or to an old people's home.

Supplementary out-patient services help cushion crisis situations in the family.

There are discussion circles and self-help groups for relatives. The aim is to provide advice, legal information and information on how to cope with conflicts.

Eight short-term care places for persons seriously and not so seriously in need of help were set up under the organisational umbrella of an old people's home.

Patients can stay for up to six weeks. This gives their relatives a chance to go on holiday or bridges periods during which the relatives are ill themselves or are undergoing treatment in a health resort.

This short-term care service is a particular relief for the women who look after their relatives.

A day care institution which looks after up to 30 people during the day has already existed for many years.

The day inmates are picked up at home in the morning and brought back home in the evening.

Group work, training to cope with everyday situations, outings and therepeutic measures are offered.

The service tries to make it easier for old people to move outside their own four walls and thus give relatives more time for their jobs or relaxation.

The examples show that the extended out-patient and partly in-patient services definitely make life easier for the often overtaxed relatives.

However, there ia still a great deal to be done in the field of local care for the elderly, even in Münster:

1. Especially with regard to single persons or slightly senile persons – the number of persons in both groups is increasing — the care and nursing required soon exceeds the staffing capacities of the welfare centres and the time available for their services.

2. As soon as care problems arise more and more people are simply being sent to hospitals. They are then transferred to psychiatric wards or homes.

Only 0.7 per cent of the older patients looked after by hospital social services were able to go back home following short-term care.

3. The variety of care for the elderly services are inadequately coordinated. Better "networking" is needed.

In particular the peripheral fields of services for the elderly — for example, hospitals, psychiatric treatment and general practitioners — have hardly been integrated so far.

Care for the elderly at a local level lags behind the development of the population. The limitations of the current system are becoming increasingly apparent.

This is clearly reflected in the nursing shortage, the waiting lists for nursing homes and the growing number of rejections by welfare centres.

There is urgent need for improvement. The allocation ratio of distribution and the number of places in this field are outdated.

The Münster study makes it clear: the extension of out-patient and partly in-patient services can ensure medical care, extend advisory help, enable holidays from care commitments and support relatives in crisis situations and during illness.

More money is needed, however, to maintain a workable system.

Domestic care is undoubtedly more humane and less expensive for old people; but it must also remain humane for the women who most of the caring.

Ulrich Kettler

(Frankfurter Rundschau, 23 September 1989)

Open old folks' homes, network social services

If old people's homes are neither residential dwellings nor clinics shouldn't they be classified as commercial enterprises and be built on industrial estates?," Konrad Hummel asked provocatively during his speech at the first European Home Wardens Congress held in the ICC in Berlin.

Roughly 600 home wardens from 18 countries attended the conference, which focused on the definition of the ideal old people's home of the future and on how to make sure that the elderly are not branded as second-class citizens.

The topic is highly relevant. The North Rhine-Westphalia Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs recently presented a study which showed that the number of centenarians — of which there are currently 2,000 in the Federal Republic of Germany — will increase fivefold to 10,000 by the year 2000.

Konrad Hummel explained that although the necessary development towards open homes and social care networks had begun the path to success is arduous.

If wardens intend opening up their homes this would water down existing norms, categorisation according to fixed rates, persons entitled to care and responsibilities.

This could result in unclear demarcations of competence, said Hummel, and could turn home wardens into "lots of little Gorbachovs."

He added that the Health Reform Act encourages opening up the homes by stressing the aspect of short-term care — the best way of turning homes into care centres in which people can be advised, treated and helped through mobile services.

The desired networking of the care services, however, can only be successful if the homes, clinics, care services and residential construction are planned and financed together.

In Hummel's opinion a call to open up the homes is not enough to enable people to grow older under more humane circumstances.

"We must ask ourselves whether our common room can serve as a location for the general meeting of the philatelist's association, memory training can be carried out by adult education instructors or a warm-water bathing day organised for our residents in the indoor swimming baths."

Hummel insisted that greater acceptance and integration are needed on both sides. Young people should be involved to a greater extent in care activities for the elderly and older people must learn to appreciate the problems facing youth.

Denmark appears to be one step ahead of Germany in this respect. The Danish speaker at the conference, Anne Lind Madsen, explained that her demands for a prevention of breaks in the continuity of a person's biography when moving into a home, for self-determination for the elderly and for less passivity have already been quite successfully translated into practice.

Since 1987 it is forbidden by law to build any more nursing homes; only residential dwellings for old people are allowed to be constructed.

This makes it possible to look after old people in the proximity of their familiar surroundings.

Newly-built dwellings have a minimum size of 67 square metres, are self-contained and have emergency call systems. In addition, there is a round-the-clock mobile service.

Since July this year the government has provided money for a domestic help wherever needed.

Whereas pensions used to be withheld and the ageing home residents only given pocket money pension money is now paid out.

The elderly inmates have to pay about 15 per cent of their retirement income for their rent, but the maximum rent is officially laid down. On top of this there are costs for the corresponding care and other services.

The Danish reform model is financed by local communities and pension funds.

Anne Lind Madsen described the Danish model as "very humane, but extremely expensive." It is only possible because the average tax burden in Denmark is 55 per cent.

The number of old persons is also increasing subsantially in the GDR. According to Professor Schmidt from the Humboldt University over 37 per cent of today's East German pensioners are above the age of 75 in comparison with a corresponding figure of just under 21 per cent in 1950.

Despite the "complex care system" East German citizens do not have to pay prescription fees and are entitled to a

Continued on page 15

■ A RAILWAY STATION IN BERLIN

The Bunker of Tears that straddles two worlds

Mannheimer MORGEN

Last station in West Berlin, passengers on the U-Bahn (tube or metro suburban train) are told at Kochstrasse station. The train resumes its underground journey, but it travels much more slowly as it goes into the East.

This part of East Berlin forms a salient and the train will re-emerge in the West in a few minutes. The entire city once used this line but, since the Wall went up in 1961, it is only for those in the West. The stations in the East are still there, but they are only ghost stations, dimly lit and guarded. They are bricked up to keep out East Berliners, who have their own U-Bahn, safely and hermetically sealed off from the West.

But our train does make one stop in its journey under the pot-holed streets of East Berlin. Suddenly it is bright again: the train is at Friedrichstrasse, the station that serves as a border checkpoint. Trains come here from the East and from the West, under the ground and above it.

You get off and head for the checkpoint. The walls are of green tiles, but the first impression is not that. It is the smell, a smell that is everywhere in East Germany: a mixture of cleaning solution, iron and alcohol.

Through a long and draughty tunnel, over nooked and crannied steps and corridors, passengers hurry to change to the S-Bahn, which will carry them elsewhere in West Berlin; or maybe they are going to the East, which means they are going to the checkpoint, the hole in the Wall.

The signs are in an unfamiliar style. An uneasy feeling descends on the hordes of tourists trying to find their way. It's not that easy, for Bahnhof Friedrichstrasse is a four-storey labyrinth.

Theatre critic Friedrich Luft once described the corridors as "Hell's Passages". People hurry past each other silently. This is not the place for chatter. The atmosphere is unreal, even tormenting. You feel controlled. Cameras hang everywhere. Somewhere behind these walls, members of the East Berlin state security service sit in front of monitor screens. They are watching you.

After going up and down steps and stairs and round a few corners, you eventually arrive at the smoky-glass door where a lit sign proclaims: "Einreise in die DDR" (Entry to East Germany). Two border guards stand at the entr[illegible]

"Aufenhalt Verboten" (Waiting Forbidden) says a sign on the wall. But people are waiting. At any time of day or night lots of people wait here. They are expecting relatives or friends to arrive from the East. They lean against the wall, crouch on the steps or pace tensely back and forwards. Berliners call this place "the bunker of tears". Many times a day, scenes of joyful reunion or tearful separation take place both on the western and eastern sides of this control point.

A young couple wait for her parents who, now they are pensioners, are free to come and go as they want. The couple are nervous. The parents are already an hour late. You can see on their faces they are hoping nothing has gone wrong. They know nothing is ever certain on the other side.

A few years ago, there was a constant flow of Tamils, Lebanese and Iranians through here, pathetic little bundles of belongings under their arms. They were heading for a place where there was no war — and for riches. Now, the flow has dropped to a trickle. They need to obtain visas in their homeland before airlines will bring them.

Not only city commuter trains use Friedrichstrasse station. Trains come from West Germany and from other parts of the East Bloc. Above ground now. A group of Africans are carrying at least 20 packets held together by string. They don't want to say what the parcels contain. They don't want to say much at all except that they are students at Lumumba University in Moscow and that they are waiting for the East-West Express to arrive from Paris.

The amount individual people carry from West to East is amazing. Many have several suitcases plus bags or plastic shopping bags, rucksacks and cardboard cartons. Today, a double-bass is being taken across, the man carrying the front at the place where the noise comes out and the woman the other end.

The mass of languages is impressive. After German, the most common language is Polish. Many Poles make their way home after visiting relations in West Germany or West Berlin as tourists. They crowd the platforms where the longdistance trains leave.

Meanwhile, groups of three East German border police saunter past carriages of the long-distance trains. These trains will later be thoroughly searched with dog teams. At the front of the station, an observation ledge is mounted high up underneath the opaque roof. Here, more border police parade their silhouettes in the dull light as they watch the passengers way below.

At a platform parallel to the long-distance trains and at the same level is the S-Bahn which runs between Friedrichstrasse and Zoo station in the West. On another parallel line is the suburban train which leaves in the direction of Alexanderplatz in East Berlin. But this is separated by a wall so East and West cannot see each other.

All this is not what Kaiser Wilhelm I had in mind when, in 1882, he inaugurated Friedrichstrasse Bahnhof. In those days, the station was the departing point for locals and tourists to go for a walk along Unter den Linden (a broad, elegant boulevard which runs east-west and which, today, is abruptly cut off from the West by the Wall) and the other sights of the area. Here it is just a stone's throw to the original centre of Berlin with its superb old buildings (most of which have been restored after being badly damaged in the war).



Nothing here is ever certain . . . Friedrichstrasse station on the eastern side.
(Photo: Hockauf)

In 1923, another track was added for long-distance trains and the station developed into a junction handling 700 trains and 100,000 passengers. In 1931, thousands gathered here to welcome Charlie Chaplin.

In 1945, at the end of the war, only the steel skeleton of the building survived, although the S-Bahn station remained in operation. When the Wall was built in 1961, the capitalist world was cut off from the Communist world — and Friedrichstrasse began its role as a station straddling two political systems.

Going into East Berlin begins with a wait in a queue. In the eyes of the East Berlin authorities, people come in four categories: East Germans themselves; Germans from the capitalist Federal Republic of Germany; residents of West Berlin; and foreigners. They all have their own control chamber (in fact, foreigners and West Germans are usually processed in the same room.)

The queues in the white-tiled room move slowly. Older people make sure with embarrassing attentiveness that no one jumps the queue. Everyone has their papers at the ready. Behind the door in the narrow processing room, border officials sit behind a glass screen mounted on the shoulder-high imitationwood counter. Only their faces are visible. Their hands work away out of sight under the counter so no one can see what is happening to the passports.

Above the officials' heads is a large mirror placed at an angle so they can see what people are carrying, what is behind them and, presumably, if anyone is crawling along the floor in an effort to escape control. A few stamps later, the visitor leaves the box and the door slams behind him — locked. Ahead is a uniformed cashier. The sum of 25 marks now changes hands. West for East. The traveller gets the East marks. It's an invitation that can't be resisted because the exchange is compulsory. Then another 5 marks is handed over for the privilege of receiving the visa. Twenty five marks (East) can be difficult to get rid of if you're spending only an afternoon in East Berlin.

Then comes the customs to check that no nuclear weapons are being imported. Then you go through another door — and suddenly, the eastern version of the Bunker of Tears is right in front of us. It is little different from the western model. People staring and hoping, waiting impatiently for relatives or girl friends, boy friends or just friends.

People in the West have several advantages. One is the chance to smuggle. Someone once said this had become a mass sport. East Berlin has duty-free kiosks on the western side. Naturally, only West marks are accepted. This means that West Berliners can step off the U-Bahn at Friedrichstrasse, buy duty-free alcohol or cigarettes (these kiosks, known as Intershops, advertise their goods as being 35 per cent cheaper — than what is not specified) — and they do.

Trains (West) stop and people pour out and queue up. Many commuters travelling between their dormitory suburb in the south of West Berlin and their place of work in the north, use any one of the 17 sales points to buy cheap cigarettes and spirits.

A carton of American cigarettes costs 29 marks (a saving of about 7 or 8 marks over the West Berlin retail price). The East German economy is profiting mightily thereby. It estimates that the Intershop chain (more than just those in Berlin) bring in a pure profit of one billion marks a year.

An older man throws a guilty glance over his shoulder as he packs several cartons of cigarettes into his bag. If he has bad luck, he will be checked by one of the 80 officers of the (West) mobile customs patrol which make spot checks at the five stations on the border. It is legal to buy one carton of duty-free cigarettes and a litre of spirits — but only if a passenger has really gone across the border.

(Border customs are not formalised because the Western part of Germany does not recognise the border as an international one. There are no permanent immigration controls on the Western side. Any formalising of controls would be welcomed by East Berlin as confirming it as a capital city in its own right.- Ed.)

Smuggling only pays off in large amounts. In 1988, the mobile unit confiscated well over five million cigarettes in their spot checks. Ditmar Paulig, head of the unit, says that alcohol is too heavy to warrant smuggling on a large scale. In 1988, only 4,510 litres of spirits was impounded.

Some Westerners don't even run the risk of getting caught with their Intershop duty-free goods. They empty their bottles on the spot, so much so that passers by sometimes get the impression that the annual meeting of the German Schnapps Brotherhood is taking place.

One tramp lies undisturbed on a platform bench seat and sleeps it off. He has removed his shoes to make himself more comfortable. Some of his mates have already topped up on the cheap and, feeling no pain, leave this tramps' paradise in the direction of Bahnhof Zoo. By S-Bahn.

Henning Richter

(Mannheimer Morgen, 21 September 1989)

Continued from page 14

nursing allowance — there is an incredible increase in the need for rehabilitation [illegible]

Organisational problems impede the adequate provision of such places. A major reason for this, Schmidt added, is the fact that "everything is free of charge in our state."

Although the *Volkssolidarität* homehelp service provides food for roughly 200,000 people every day many services at home do not belong to the social field. There is a great deal to improve in future.

Schmidt pointed out that a further shortcoming is the fact that there are hardly any geriatricians in the GDR. The education system shows a Prussian character in this respect.

Schmidt concluded his speech by expressing his hopes that much more importance will be attached to geriatrics in the GDR in future.

Rebecca Cop

(Der Tagesspiegel, Berlin, 17 September 1989)